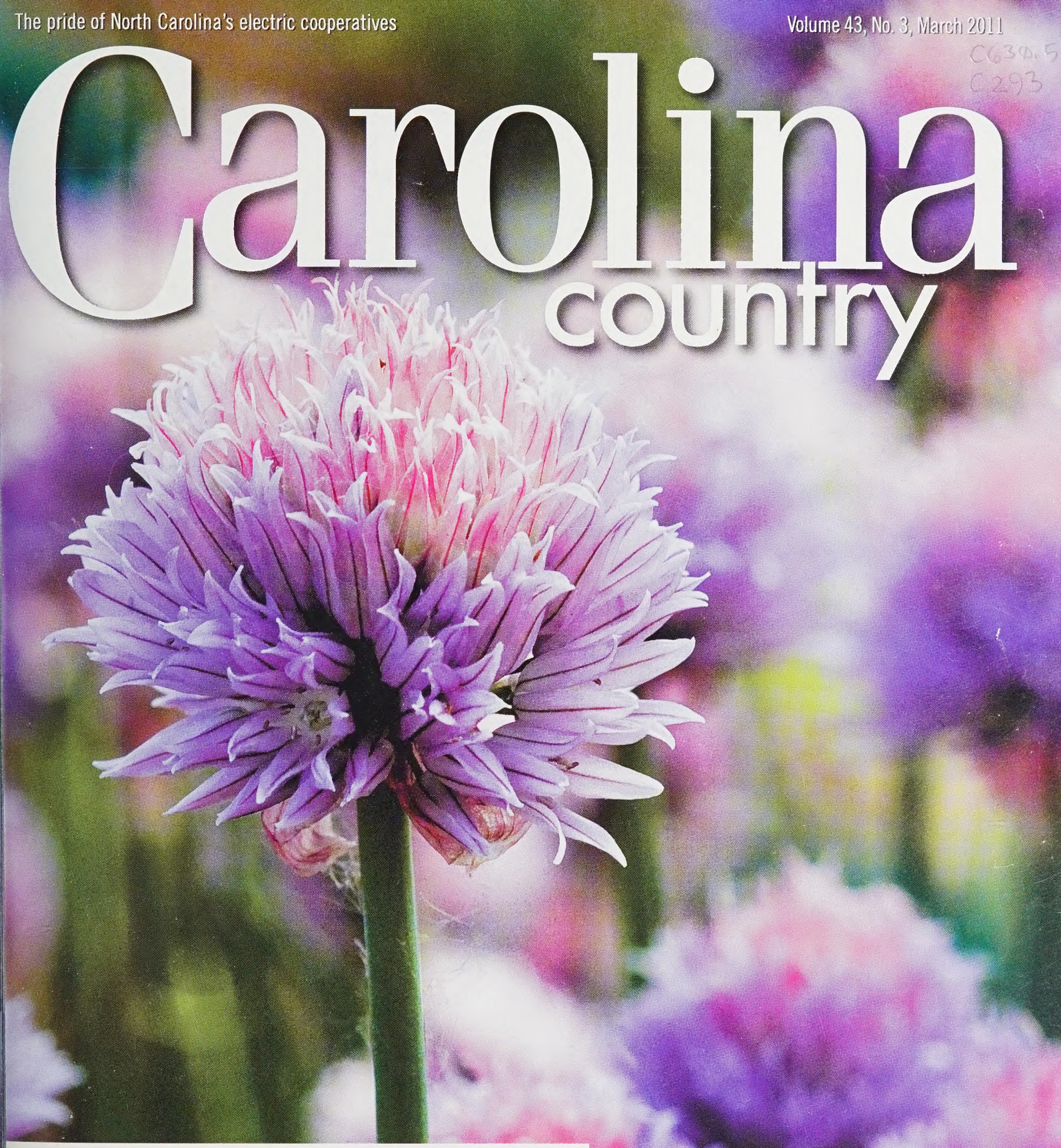
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 43, No. 3, March 2011

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Spring Garden Ideas

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Adventures in Richmond County—page 38

SAVE When You Grow A Zoysia Lawn From Plugs!

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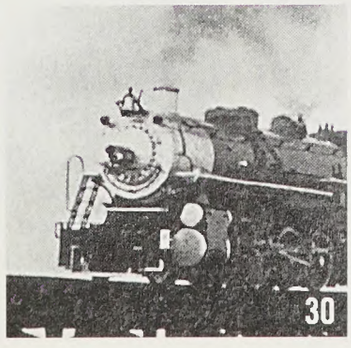
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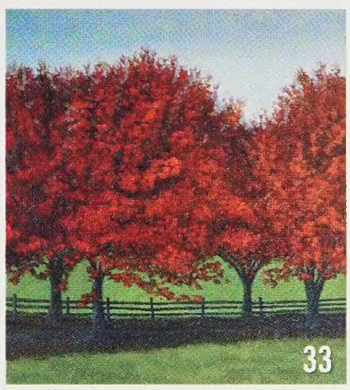
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The violet blossoms of chives not only add color to your landscape, but can also become part of your salads and casseroles. Learn more about using chives in our Carolina Country Gardens guide on page 20.







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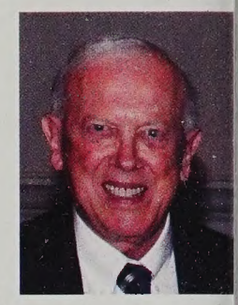
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Across The Pond: a European energy policy perspective



By Robert K. Koger

There's nothing like seeing another part of the world to lend perspective to how we're doing here in North Carolina.

In November, I was among 26 North Carolinians who visited Europe on a mission to see how the European Union is handling energy and environmental challenges. We represented the energy industry, environmental organizations, state government and philanthropies. The privately-funded trip was arranged by the Center for International Understanding, a 32-year-old institution affiliated with the University of North Carolina system that helps educate and prepare state leaders for global opportunities.

We focused on energy-related policies and systems in Belgium, France and Germany—nations in the forefront of energy planning among European Union countries.

As you might guess, the 27 EU nations each follow their own cultural paths, much like the U.S. states do, while advancing the EU as a whole. European policy goals differ from ours, but it is clear that to meet all our energy and environmental requirements in the decades to come, we all must carefully balance our natural resources to provide us with reliable sources of energy. There is not just one, or even two best ways to develop our energy resources. We need to develop them all. And the bright side is that the whole process can be very good for our economy. The emerging energy future includes good jobs for our citizens.

Europe's energy situation also differs from ours. Electricity rates on average are twice what we pay. (In Denmark, rates are about 36 cents per kilowatt-hour.) Gasoline costs about $8 per gallon. Europeans are prudent about energy use because they have to be. They use about half the electricity we use, mainly because they don't use as much electricity for heating, and air-conditioning is nowhere near as prevalent as it is here.

But like North Carolina, European nations will need more energy to meet demand in the very near future, and more infrastructure for delivering that power.

How are they going about it? Like North Carolina, European nations have mandated a shift to renewable energy sources. For one thing, the requirements give us a focus, a goal to meet. Their goals are more ambitious than ours. The EU by 2020 wants 20 percent of its energy to come from renewable sources: wind, solar, biomass and others. By 2020, they want to see greenhouse gas emissions measure 20 percent below 1990 levels and to improve energy efficiency by 20 percent.

What drives European policy, however, is exactly what drives ours: energy security, the changing climate, and moving to a clean-energy economy. Similar to our risky dependence on foreign fuels, Europe is weaning itself from a risky dependence on Russian natural gas.

Seeing some of their facilities really opened our eyes and our minds. In parts of Germany, we saw colossal wind turbines turning 165-foot blades that each weigh 10 tons. One region of what used to be East Germany acquires half its electricity from renewable sources, mostly wind. France, on the other hand, is a world leader in clean nuclear energy, with some 58 plants supplying electricity to much of Europe. Electric rates in France as a result are the lowest on the continent. As much as 40 percent of spent nuclear fuel is reprocessed safely and re-used.

We came home convinced that the U.S. needs a comprehensive energy policy, a balanced development of our natural resources and technology (clean coal, nuclear, renewable), and consistent, fair regulations within both government and private business that allow us to plan effectively for the future.

Dr. Robert K. Koger, P.E., is president and executive director of Advanced Energy, a Raleigh-based, non-profit that focuses on energy efficiency for commercial and industrial markets, electric motors and drives, plug-in transportation and applied building science. North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation is a member.

Should we use our heat pump's auxiliary heat strips?

I have tried many times to convince people that constantly changing their thermostat settings costs them money, because it makes the heating system run extra to re-heat the house's structure, furniture, etc, back up to the higher temperature, rather than leaving it at a constant setting so it can stabilize the whole house temperature.

But I do have a question about heat pumps, which draw into the house residual heat in the ambient air outside the house: At what point does the outside air have so little ambient heat that the heat pump becomes less efficient than running the auxiliary heat strips on the "Emer. Heat" setting? I have been told that this threshold is somewhere between 40 degrees F. and the freezing point. This winter with the unusual cold spell we've had, I've switched the thermostat from "Heat" to "Emer. Heat" when the outside temp got down to 35 F., and it definitely made the circulating fan run less.

Henry M. Bruce, Mocksville

Editors Reply: Without the presence of an outdoor thermostat, auxiliary or emergency heat strips are typically activated anytime the indoor thermostat setting exceeds the actual room temperature by more than 2 degrees. Therefore, it is not advisable to set your heat pump in manual emergency heat mode. The unit will detect when auxiliary heat is needed and activate the emergency strips only when necessary. Manually overriding this function means you are not getting maximum efficiency from your unit.

A new high-efficiency, properly installed heat pump should not need auxiliary heat unless the outdoor temperatures are at or below freezing.

Kids say the darnedest things

I kept my 3-year-old granddaughter, Symone, for a weekend recently. When she came to pick her up, my daughter noticed that Symone's fingernails had been polished. "Who polished your fingernails?" her mom asked. My granddaughter replied, "Gramomma did. And she polished my feet nails, too!"

Mildred Leggett, Lumberton, Lumbee River EMC

Reaching out

Thank you for the enjoyable magazine you publish. I look forward to it each month and never fail to learn new things about North Carolina.

For 28 years I published a magazine for vacationers along South Carolina's Grand Strand, distributed free through motels and restaurants. Over the years and hundreds of thousands of readers, only once did a reader send me a brief note: "This is the best publication of its kind I have seen."

I didn't save it. I didn't take time to reply. But I remember it and deeply regret my failure to express my appreciation to a stranger passing through.

We are all strangers, passing through. Let us all take time to reach out to each other and express appreciation.

Charles Joyner, Burlington

Wendy's Snow Cream

I can't thank you enough for printing Wendy's Snow Cream recipe [January 2011]. My mom made it when I was little, but I didn't get the recipe. And when I tried to search for it, no one had ever heard of it. They insisted I meant egg cream. (I think that's some New York thing.) Hope it snows again soon so I can try it!

Suzanne Crockett

I wanted to let you know that I have always made my snow cream with whole milk, sugar and vanilla. But I tried Wendy's Snow Cream and I like it so much better. My family loved it.

Kathryn Blake, West End

Editors Note: You can see Wendy's Snow Cream recipe on our website: www.carolinacountry.com

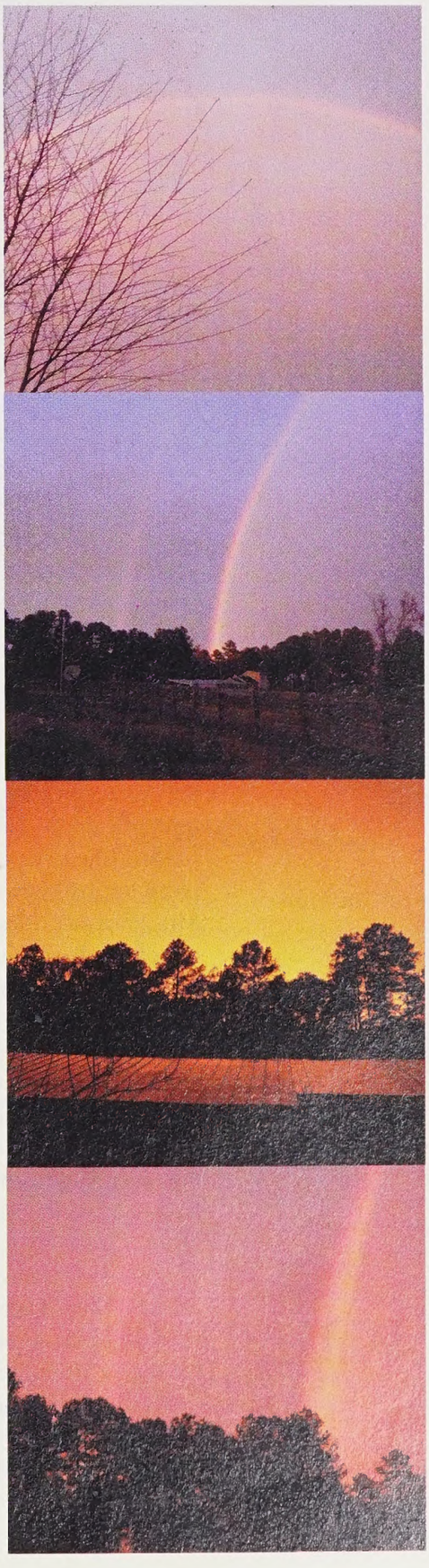
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Breathtaking

These pictures were taken within a 20-minute span one October evening from my yard after a rainstorm. It is amazing how fast the colors changed. Breathtaking.

Vickie Fisher, Cameron, Central EMC



JACOB'S LOG:

She was Something Else

By Jacob Brooks

On Jan. 13, 2011, my mother, Sandra Brooks, gained her wings as one of God's angels. She was 40 and in Duke Hospital receiving treatment for the leukemia that had plagued her body for almost a year. Unfortunately, a fungus developed in her lungs and breathing became difficult for her. It wasn't long after the fungus grew that it was simply too much to bear. She passed away that Thursday night while my brother, father and I all stood around her holding her hands. She put up an unbelievable fight for 10 months and 10 days (nine of the months in the hospital). Even though she lost her battle with cancer, she won her battle as a Christian, because she never lost her faith in God during this trial.

I was always the "mama's boy." As a little boy I would follow my mom around the house as she did her chores. I can remember standing directly beside her with my Pooh Bear in hand, looking up at her as she folded laundry. I wanted to be wherever she was. When I began kindergarten, I was reluctant to say the least. Mama would walk me to the classroom every morning, and when she would leave, the flood gates of Hell opened. I would kick, scream, bite, cry, pull hair, smack, throw shoes and plead for my Mama to come back. I can remember Mrs. Wagoner (bless her heart) trying to pull me out of the door frame because I had braced myself and was refusing to go into the classroom. I wanted to be with my Mama.

Hands down, she was the best mother in the world. She was everything that a mother should be and more. She took care of us and made sure we had everything we needed. There was nothing like a hug from Mama when I was down or having a bad day. Every single day she told my brother Josh, my father and me that she loved us. Our house was never filled with the finest furniture or appliances, but it was filled with love. I was fortunate enough to have her as my mother for the 19 years I did.

My mother's biggest fear was that she might hurt someone's feelings. She was always kind and respectful to everyone she met, except maybe for some Dallas Cowboys or Chicago Bears fans. (She was a Packers fan.) She always went out of her way to make sure everyone was treated with kindness and courtesy. She taught Josh and me that everything had feelings. She told us that even our toys, pillows and blankets had feelings. So when we were little we would play with every toy or use every pillow because we didn't want to hurt its feelings. For a lack of a better term, she was simply Something Else. God knows that I can only hope to be half of the person she was.



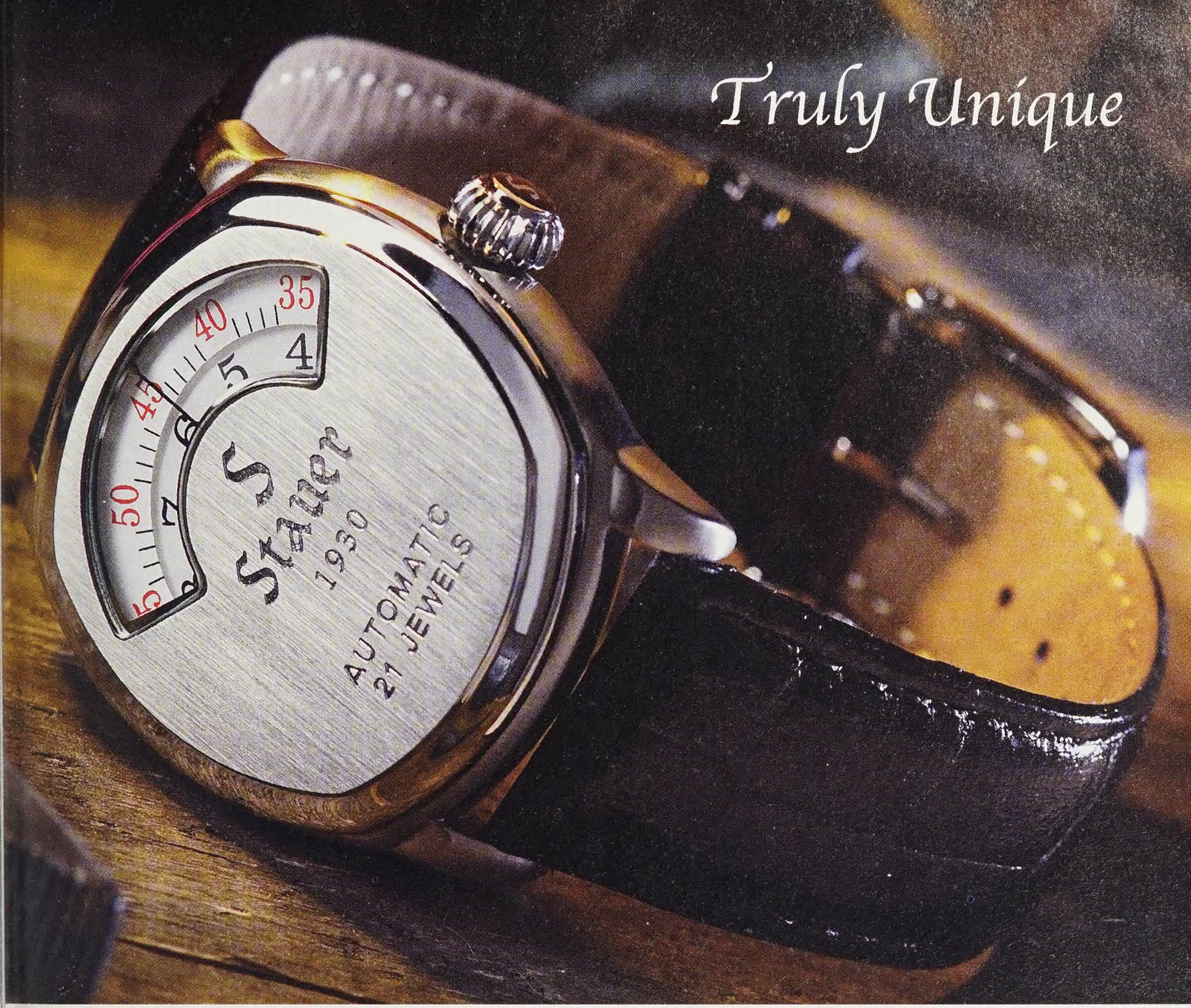
This was my aunt's 16th birthday in February 1993. Mama is at the left holding me as an 18-month-old boy. Beside her (from left) are Dad, Papaw Aubrey, and Uncle Tim holding Laura. In front (from left) are Mamaw Carol with Sarah, and Aunt Kathy with my brother Josh.

I've always been told that I look like my Mama. That used to make me angry, because I thought everyone was telling me I looked like a girl. But now that I know what people are talking about, I hope that when you look at me you may see her smile or see her eyes.

I'm not angry that my mother is gone. I'm happy that I had her as my wonderful mother for 19 years. A cruel world like this didn't deserve someone like her. To be honest, I wouldn't bring her back if I could. I love you, Mama.

Jacob Brooks was last year's national spokesman for the rural electric cooperatives' Youth Leadership Council. He represented Blue Ridge Electric on the 2009 Youth Tour to Washington, and will attend this year's tour in June as a "red shirt" guide. He suspended his attendance at UNC-Chapel Hill after his freshman year in order to be with his family during his mother's illness. He can be reached at 856 Bailey Rd., Ennice, NC 28623.





Time travel at the speed of a 1935 Speedster?

The 1930s brought unprecedented innovation in machine-age technology and materials. Industrial designers from the auto industry translated the principles of aerodynamics and streamlining into everyday objects like radios and toasters. It was also a decade when an unequaled variety of watch cases and movements came into being. In lieu of hands to tell time, one such complication, called a jumping mechanism, utilized numerals on a disc viewed through a window. With its striking resemblance to the dashboard gauges and radio dials of the decade, the jump hour watch was indeed "in tune" with the times!

The Stauer *1930s Dashtronic* deftly blends the modern functionality of a 21-jewel automatic movement and 3-ATM water resistance with the distinctive, retro look of a jumping display (not an actual jumping complication). The stainless steel 1 1/2" case is complemented with a black alligator-embossed leather band. The band is 9 1/2" long and will fit a 7–8 1/2" wrist.



True to Machine Art esthetics, the sleek brushed stainless steel case is clear on the back, allowing a peek at the inner workings.

Try the Stauer *1930s Dashtronic* Watch for 30 days and if you are not receiving compliments, please return the watch for a full refund of the purchase price. If you have an appreciation for classic design with precision accuracy, the *1930s Dashtronic* Watch is built for you. This watch is a limited edition, so please act quickly. Our last two limited edition watches are totally sold out!

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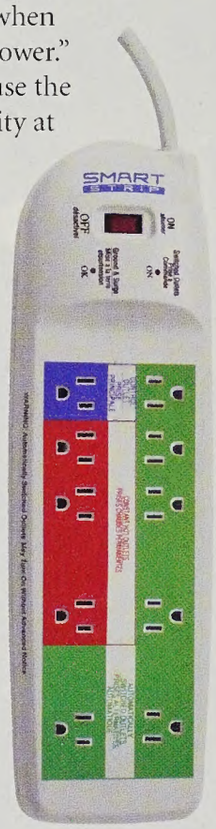
OUTSMART YOUR *power vampires*

Have you ever gone to unplug an AC adapter from a wall outlet or surge protector and noticed it was warm to the touch? That heat is energy and it's costing you money, even when the electronic device that's plugged into it is turned off. Devices that draw power even when they are off are said to be using "standby power." Many have dubbed them "vampires" because the plugs look like two fangs that suck electricity at night while you sleep.

The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) (http://standby.lbl.gov) estimates that a typical American home has 40 products constantly drawing power.

Although various agencies have reported energy losses from these devices, most agree that together vampire devices amount to at least 10 percent of residential electricity use.

So what can you do to stop the vampires? You could unplug the devices each time you're finished using them, but that could require a significant change in behavior. Also, your outlets might be located in awkward places that are not easy to reach. In addition, unplugging and re-plugging devices can lead to frayed wires, causing a fire hazard.



Sears carries a "smart" power strip for $35 to $40. They also are available from vendors online.

Enter the Smart Strip! A Smart Strip is basically a surge protector with some added functionality. Most are color-coded and labeled to avoid confusion. One outlet on the strip will be marked as the "control outlet," which is wired to the "switched outlets." A sensor monitors the flow of electricity to the control outlet and when there is a significant drop (as when you turn the device off), the control outlet switches power off to the switched outlets. There are several other outlets on the Smart Strip marked "constant hot outlets" that act like the standard outlets on a surge protector in that they always receive power regardless of what the device plugged into the control outlet is doing.

For example, on your desk you have a computer, a computer monitor, some speakers, a printer and maybe some other devices. In this example, let's add a cell phone charger and a scanner. You would plug your computer into the control outlet, and the monitor, speakers, printer and scanner into the switched outlets. When you turn your computer off, the Smart Strip stops sending power to those devices you only use when the computer is on. You wouldn't plug the cell phone charger into the switched outlet if you want to charge your cell phone when your computer is off.

—Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives

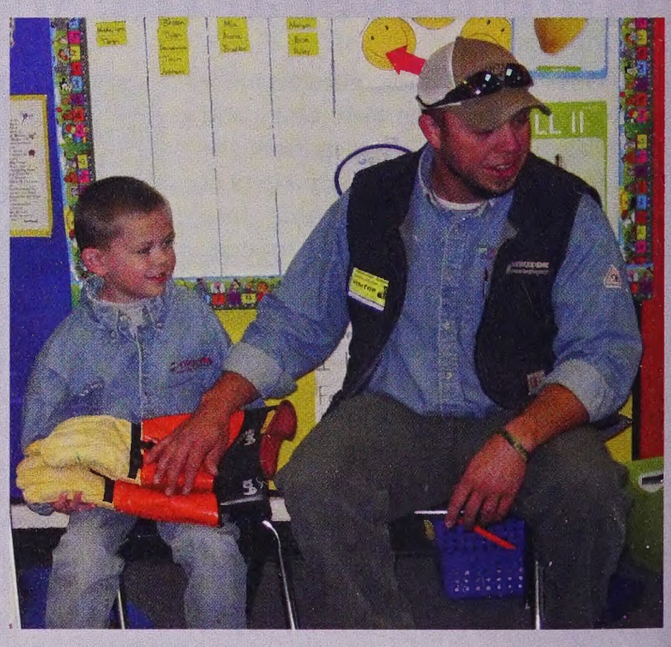
State's Utility Savings Initiative saved $325 million since 2003



North Carolina's Utility Savings Initiative saved the state's taxpayers more than $55.3 million in utility costs in the last fiscal year and avoided emitting more than 164,886 metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, according to a report issued recently by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Energy Office. Since the Utility Savings Initiative was launched in 2003, the state has saved more than $325 million while investing $11 million into utility savings improvements in state government, university and community college facilities.

"These savings are very significant, especially during these times when all of us need to make sure we are getting the most out of every dollar, particularly taxpayer dollars," said Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco.

The Utility Savings Initiative was an outgrowth of the 2002 Governor's Commission to Promote Government Efficiency and Savings on State Spending. It is a statewide program to cut utility spending and use in public buildings. State law requires that per square-foot utility (electricity and water) consumption be cut by 20 percent by the end of 2010 and by 30 percent by the end of 2015, based on utility use for the 2002–03 fiscal year.



Brian Noland, a journeyman lineman with Haywood EMC, visited his son Riley's kindergarten class in Clyde on Community Worker Day. He talked about what it's like to be a lineman for an electric utility.

FERC chief praises cooperative model

The head of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission this winter praised co-op officials as forward-thinking leaders with much to be proud of.

"I do believe that a co-op is the best format for a distribution utility," FERC chairman Jon Wellinghoff said to a meeting of electric cooperative CEOs. "You are innovators, and I like innovators. Some of the things that you've done are far and beyond the other sectors of the energy area."

Wellinghoff said co-ops and FERC have a "wonderful" relationship, which he looks forward to continuing. "Your leadership in the areas of smart grid and energy efficiency, I think, are very important," he said. "You're definitely leaders there."

Reviewing some FERC initiatives, Wellinghoff said much of what is going on "revolves around improving efficiency of the system," while keeping a watchful eye on consumers' interests.

Regarding upgrades and new construction within the nation's transmission system, Wellinghoff said, "I think we all share the goal of building more transmission in this country."

—Electric Co-op Today

State building code will adopt efficiency

The North Carolina Building Code Council in December adopted new energy-efficient standards for residential and commercial construction.

At the urging of Gov. Beverly Perdue, the council set building standards that will require additional 15 percent energy efficiency in residential construction and 30 percent more efficiency for residential buildings starting in 2012. The council also adopted a voluntary 30 percent standard for residential construction.

Transmission planning in North Carolina

Participants in the North Carolina Transmission Planning Collaborative (NCTPC) have identified 14 major transmission projects, representing more than $473 million in investments over the next decade, as part of the 2010–2020 Collaborative Transmission Plan for North Carolina (2010 Plan). This compares to the 2009 Plan estimate of $595 million for 18 projects. Some projects from the 2009 Plan have been delayed to reflect the reduced load forecasts resulting from the weak economy. The plan is updated annually.

The collaborative was formed in 2005 to develop a shared plan for electric transmission system enhancements in the state. Participants include Duke Energy Carolinas, Progress Energy Carolinas, North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC) and ElectriCities of North Carolina.

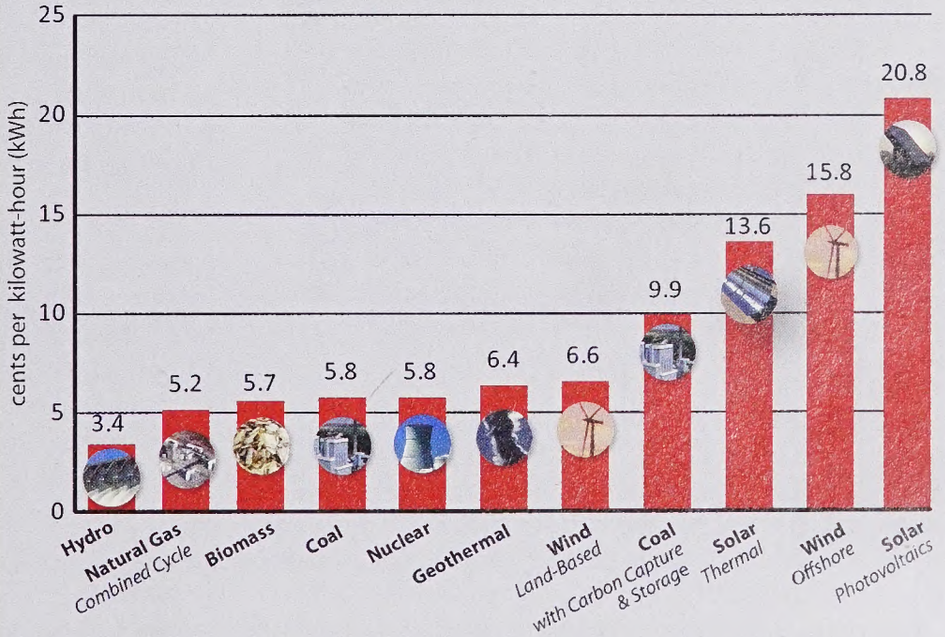
The scope of the 2010 planning study included a base reliability analysis for transmission needs to meet load growth between 2011 and 2020 as well as an analysis of different system conditions under various hypothetical climate change legislation scenarios. The climate change legislation scenarios in the study considered the potential impact of the following hypothetical alternatives to meet future load demand forecasts:

- Retire 100 percent of existing un-scrubbed coal generation plants (approximately 1,500 megawatts in the Progress Energy control area, 2,000 mw in the Duke control area) by 2015, replace with new generation
- Coastal North Carolina wind sensitivity with wind injections, based on information obtained from the UNC "Coastal Wind: Energy for North Carolina's Future" report.

"The 2010 study shows how the NCTPC continues to adapt and improve the planning process to address the challenges of an uncertain energy future," said David Beam of NCEMC, chairman of the NCTPC Oversight/Steering Committee.

The Cost of New Generation

The cost to build new power plants can vary widely. Each type of generation carries a ballpark price tag. The prices shown below, based on each kWh produced, take into account plant construction, maintenance, fuel, and operating costs.



Estimates by National Rural Electric Cooperative Association using U.S. Energy Information Administration data from November 2010

Try This!

Energy efficiency doesn't have to be expensive

By Magen Howard

It's easy to get overwhelmed by two words: energy efficiency. What should I do? How should I do it? Do I have to replace my entire heating and cooling system to see savings?

The easy answer is no, you can do a lot of upgrading with little money.

On your next trip to the home improvement or local hardware store, take this shopping guide with you. It lists five areas where you a few simple energy efficiency investments will produce savings right away.

Lighting

Since lighting accounts for about 11 percent of home energy use, switch your traditional incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). An Energy Star-qualified CFL uses about 75 percent less energy than a traditional bulb, lasts up to 10 times longer, and can save about $40 in energy costs over its lifetime. A four-pack of 14-watt CFLs (equivalent to a 60-watt incandescent) runs about $6.

Filling the cracks

A tube of caulk and a roll of weather stripping can go a long way toward saving money on your electricity bill. It's easy to find where cold air leaks in around doors and windows—simply hold your hand out and feel. Caulk around windows, dryer vents and fans for about $2 a tube, and weather strip around doors for about $4 a roll.

There are also some not-so obvious places for air to flow in and out of your home, notably outlets and behind switch plates. To see if you have air flowing through your outlets or switch plates, light a stick of incense, hold it in front, and watch for the smoke to be disrupted. You can find special sealing kits for outlets and switch plates for about $2.

And don't forget about applying weather stripping around your attic hatch or pull-down stairs. You may also want to install an insulator box to place over the opening. A kit costs around $40.

Programmable thermostat

Beginning at $40, a programmable thermostat becomes a larger investment, but you could save $180 a year with the proper settings. For the biggest impact, program your thermostat to raise the temperature during summer and lower in the winter while you're out of the house. You can also program it to dip lower at night while sleeping. The thermostat can be set to automatically revert to a comfortable setting shortly before you arrive home or wake up. These gadgets are best for people who are away from home for extended periods throughout the week.



Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

Sealing ductwork can save about $170 a year, according to TogetherWeSave.com.

Sealing ductwork

More than 40 percent of your home's energy use goes for heating and cooling, so it's important to keep that air in the home. Leaky ductwork remains one of the main culprits of hot and cold air loss. Properly sealing ductwork can save about $170 a year.

If your home's ducts are exposed, inspect them for leaks and seal them. Look for holes and joints that have separated, and then seal them with foil-backed tape, about $6 a roll, or mastic, a type of sealant that costs about $12 a tub.

Water heater insulation

A water heater blanket can save you 4 percent to 9 percent in water heating costs—a big ticket item since 12 percent of your home's energy use goes toward water heating. Choose a blanket with an insulating value of at least R-8, which runs about $20.

You can also save more than $70 per year by keeping your water heater's thermostat set at 120 degrees F.

For more tips, visit www.TogetherWeSave.com.

Magen Howard writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

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Driveway revolution: A look at electric cars

By Brian Sloboda and Andrew Cotter

When it comes to all-electric vehicles, choices are currently limited to the Chevrolet Volt, the Nissan Leaf, and a growing number of specialty manufacturers or retrofit kits. Other auto makers have electric car offerings in the wings.

Comparing cars

Not all electric vehicles are alike. The Nissan Leaf, for example, boasts a driving range of roughly 100 miles. Once its 16-kilowatt-hour (kwh) lithium-ion batteries are drained, you better be near a 110-volt power outlet for recharging, or have the phone number for roadside assistance handy.

The Chevy Volt offers a gasoline safety net for its pack of 16-kwh lithium-ion batteries. The car will run on a charge for 40 miles. Once the batteries are exhausted, a gasoline-powered generator produces electricity to keep the car rolling at least until you run out of gas. The Volt can also be recharged by plugging it in to a traditional 110-volt outlet.

All-electric vehicles carry higher price tags than comparable conventional gas-fueled versions, typically $10,000 to $15,000 more, even after federal tax incentives ranging from $2,500 to $7,500 (depending on battery capacity) are included. You can learn more about these tax credits at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-09-58.pdf.

As a quick comparison, we examined the 2011 Ford Focus (manufacturer's suggested retail price $16,640) and the Chevy Volt ($32,780 after tax credits, which will be phased out after 200,000 are sold). Both are four-door sedans roughly the same size.

Chevy estimates the average Volt driver will spend $1.50 per day for electricity. Meanwhile, the average Focus owner will spend almost $2.90 on gasoline daily. At $3 per gallon for gas, the average Volt driver would save $550 annually but would need to rack up that amount for 32 years to equal the difference in sticker price.

However, if gas rises to $5 per gallon, a Volt driver would save more than $1,200 annually, lowering the payback window to 13 years. Of course, actual savings depends on the number of miles driven and car options.

N.C. charging stations

Raleigh has started installing public, electric car charging stations as part of a bigger wave to eventually bring more than 350 recharging stations to the state. The electricity is free, although owners will have to pay for any related parking charges. The stations are meant to give owners who already fully charge their cars at home a few more miles while parking. The new pods, mostly financed by federal stimulus money, are primarily planned for or near urban areas, including the Triangle area and Charlotte. Installments are slated to be completed in late 2012.

Charge!

Electric cars can be recharged using a traditional 110-volt outlet found in homes. Under this method, referred to as Level 1 charging, it takes at least eight hours to charge a Volt and more than 20 hours for a Leaf.



Charging stations provide a dedicated 240-volt circuit, similar to that used for electric clothes dryers. Using this type of a station, the all-electric Nissan Leaf (shown) can be charged in four hours while the 2011 Chevy Volt can be ready to hit the highway in as little as three hours. Source: Nissan

Consumers may decide to purchase a charging station to speed things along. A charging station enables Level 2 charging by way of a dedicated 240-volt circuit. According to Edmunds Car Buying Guide (www.edmunds.com), Level 2 charging for the all-electric Leaf takes four hours while the Volt can be ready to hit the highway in as little as three hours.

Chevy estimates putting in a charging station will usually run between $1,200 to $1,500, but it can cost much more if a household's electric system needs upgrading.

A reduction in emissions

Studies by the Electric Power Research Institute, a nonprofit research consortium in Palo Alto, Calif., show electric vehicles will reduce overall emissions of various air pollutants, even when taking into account emissions from power plants needed to produce the energy for recharging.

Questions to ask yourself

- How many miles do you drive every day?
- Can you afford the cost difference between an electric and gas-burning car?
- How many amenities do you want your vehicle to have?

Brian Sloboda is a program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Andrew Cotter is also a CRN program manager.

Out with the old, in with the new

Incandescent bulbs will be cleared off store shelves over the next three years

By Megan McKoy-Noe

Although many consumers have heard of compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and other energy-efficient lighting options, traditional incandescent bulbs still represent the bulk of the residential lighting market. That may soon change.

Under the federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, new standards will require light bulbs to generate more light with less power. All general-purpose light bulbs that produce 310 lumens to 2,600 lumens of light must be 30 percent more energy efficient than incandescent models. As a result, incandescent bulbs, starting with 100-watt (w) varieties, will be phased out beginning in 2012. While there are exemptions, by 2020 most bulbs will be required to produce 45 lumens per watt. As a result, more efficient bulbs will replace today's 40w, 60w, 75w, and 100w general service incandescent bulbs.

Beginning in 2012, incandescent bulbs, starting with 100-watt varieties, will be phased out.

"Up to 12 percent of your monthly electric bill pays for lighting, so removing energy-wasting bulbs from the market will have a big impact on America's energy use," explains Erik Sorenson, a project manager with the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), which represents companies that fashion products used in the generation, transmission, distribution, control and end use of electricity.

A 60w to 100w incandescent bulb produces around 15 lumens per watt, with much of the energy given off as heat. A standard CFL, however, can produce as much as 100 lumens per watt. CFLs aren't the only lighting alternative—consumers can also save energy by using halogen bulbs and solid state bulbs (SSL), commonly referred to as light-emitting diodes or LEDs. LEDs are beginning to pull ahead of CFLs in lighting output. Cree (www.cree.com), a leading manufacturer of LEDs based in North Carolina, announced a year ago that a laboratory prototype achieved 208 lumens per watt.

The transition to more energy-efficient light bulbs will take place over the course of three years. California residents have a head start. Manufacturing of 100w bulbs there terminated on January 2011. In 2012 other states join the transition, with the manufacturing of 75w bulbs ending in 2013, and their 60w and 40w cousins disappearing a year later. As an added bonus, the replacement bulbs will be required to last longer.

"For the first time, federal law sets a minimum rated life of 1,000 hours for bulbs—the amount of time at least half of all tested bulbs operate successfully," says Sorenson.

Some consumers have already made the switch. Since 2000, incandescent lamp shipments dropped from 1.7 billion to less than 1.2 billion annually, while Energy Star estimates CFL shipments reached 400 million last year. Currently, CFLs have captured 30 percent of the lighting market. (Responding to some consumer resistance against CFLs, some Congressmen are considering repealing the incandescent ban.)

"New bulbs use less energy while providing the same amount of light," says Sorenson. "Consumers should start shopping for bulbs based on the amount of light or brightness needed." For example, a 43w halogen bulb, 15w CFL or 12w LED offers comparable light to a 60w incandescent bulb.

To find out more about lighting changes, visit NEMA at www.nemasavesenergy.org.

Megan McKoy-Noe, CCC, writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

What's Watt

Power Consumption Comparisons of Equivalent Lighting (in watts)



Incandescent	Halogen	CFL	LED
100 W	70-72 W	23-26 W	N/A
75 W	53 W	18-20 W	N/A
60 W	43 W	13-15 W	12 W
40 W	28-29 W	10-11 W	8-9 W

Source: National Electrical Manufacturers Association, Enlighten America



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Gerald Yokely - Moments in Carolina Photography

Carolina Country Gardens

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The no-dig (and less sweat) gardening alternative

Say goodbye to tilling, digging and costly garden chemicals

By John Bruce

No-dig gardening is a proven way to grow vegetables and flowers naturally—and with less work.

No-dig gardeners realize that worms, bugs and microbes are necessary for nutrients and prevention of disease. Plants deliver into the soil part of the carbon energy they produce. Microbes convert this energy into organic materials and minerals that plants need.

The rationale for traditional row gardening and tilling is to remove weeds, loosen and aerate the soil and bury organic matter. Tilling can remove existing weeds, but it almost always brings dormant weed seeds to the surface where they can germinate. When organic materials are moved deeper, less oxygen is available for converting the materials into nutrients. Then the nutrients need to be replaced. Traditional gardeners usually rely on synthetic fertilizers to amend the soil and replace the lost nutrients.

No-dig gardening lets nature do the work. One strategy is first to remove all weeds and grass from a garden area. Materials such as rotten manure, decayed sawdust or compost go straight on the surface as a layer of mulch 2 to 6 inches deep. Worms, beneficial bugs and microbes get busy beefing up the soil. They create a healthy habitat for roots to flourish.

Newspapers & mulch

Celebrated no-dig gardening author Patricia Lanza bubbles over with enthusiasm when she explains why gardeners should consider the shovel-free approach. She gardens in Tennessee.

"As an old hand at this game of gardening, I remember my own 'Ahhhh!' moment when I put all the pieces together that allowed me to make wonderful growing spaces without the use of power tools or purchased material," Lanza says. "Whether you choose to layer, grid, mulch or straw bale, you can't go wrong. Just do it!"

Websites with no-dig gardening tips

www.no-dig vegetablegarden.com

www.mothereartlinews.com/Organic-Gardening/2008-06-01/No-Dig Garden-Beds.aspx

www.sustainable-gardening-tips.com

Lanza says with no-dig methods, there's less fuss over the planting area. Free organic material, such as grass clippings and compost, are used in layers on top of a newspaper ground cover. Don't cut through the paper before planting.

First, Lanza recommends picking a spot and marking it (a garden should receive six to eight hours of sunlight and not be subject to strong wind). Cover the area with thick layers of wet newspapers, overlapped. Cover the paper with several inches each of peat moss, compost, grass clippings, chipped leaves, humus, spoiled hay, seaweed, aged manure or whatever is handy.

Water the layers of organic material until they feel like a squeezed-out sponge. Pull the layers back to the paper. Place your plants on the paper and pull the organic material back around the plant roots. Press the soil to push out the air and water. Try to use one part nitrogen-rich material (grass clippings, compost or manure) to four parts carbon-rich material (chopped leaves, peat moss, straw, spoiled hay or peat humus) for a perfect mix. Use what is readily available and free.

Sheet mulching

A similar no-dig method is sheet mulching. Newspaper or cardboard is spread out on the garden area and topped with landscape mulch. Again, weeds should be removed first if there's no time to let them die out and decay under a new blanket of sheet mulch.

Sheet mulch blocks daylight and suffocates existing grass and weeds that, over time, decompose (before the actual sheets do) to become part of the biosphere that garden plants need to thrive. Ideally, the newspaper or cardboard should be spread out before a heavy rain, but otherwise a garden hose can do what's necessary to keep the sheet thoroughly wet. When ready to plant, use a hand shovel to cut out holes for planting seeds or seedlings.

Raised beds

Raised-bed gardening—essentially planting in containers made of wood or masonry and filled with compost or manufactured soils—has been in practice for centuries. Like other no-dig approaches, raised-bed gardening keeps soil aerated, allows for more crops to grow in less space, reduces weeding and requires less fertilizer than traditional row gardens.



A no-dig garden looks like this. (John Bruce photo)

Four-foot-wide raised-beds put the working space within easy reach from both sides for most gardeners, but beds can be narrower for children to help. Length can vary according to preference. Raised beds can be elevated on tables or other platforms to ease accessibility for folks who find it uncomfortable to stoop or kneel.

Square foot gardens

Square-foot gardening is a spin on the raised-bed method. A typical square foot garden consists of a framed 4-foot-square raised-bed, divided into 16 one-foot squares—ideal for limited space. Wooden strips divide the bed into a grid that provides plants in each square enough growing room as well as separation. Each section is planted with a different crop. The number of seeds or seedlings per square varies according to plant size.

Upside down gardens

Another limited-space, no-dig alternative is a hanging (upside-down) garden. Five-gallon buckets are good for tomatoes and cucumbers. Essentially it involves drilling a two-inch hole in the bottom, placing a slit coffee filter over the hole, inserting an inverted seedling through the slit (so the root ball faces up), filling the bucket with a compost-soil mixture and hanging the bucket from a tall post in a sunny spot. Low growing spices or flowers can go in the top of the bucket. You also can buy kits for upside-down gardening.

John Bruce is a professional writer who gardens in Columbia, S.C.



Scene of a raised-bed garden. (B. Blechmann photo)



Mulch applied on top of newspaper. (Patricia Lanza photo)

Books on the subject

"All New Square Foot Gardening: Grow More in Less Space!" by Mel Bartholomew (Cool Springs Press)

"Esther Dean's Gardening Book: Growing Without Digging" (Harper and Row)

"Guide To Growing a Straw Bale Garden" by Joel Karsten (strawbalegardens.com)

"Lasagna Gardening" by Patricia Lanza (Rodale Press, Inc.)

"Lasagna Gardening for Small Spaces" by Patricia Lanza (Rodale Press, Inc.)

"Lasagna Gardening with Herbs" by Patricia Lanza (Rodale Press, Inc.)

"No-Dig Gardening & Leaves of Life" by Esther Dean (HarperCollinsPublishers)

"No-Dig Gardening" by Allen Gilbert (ABC Books)

"Weedless Gardening" by Lee Reich (Workman Publishing Company)

How to grow a straw bale garden

A vegetable garden planted in bales of straw can produce good-looking, healthy plants without weeds

By Kent Rogers

A straw bale garden is especially convenient for people who don't have a large plot of ground to till, or who are physically unable to do a lot of kneeling, bending, raking and hoeing.

I have learned that any type of straw or hay bale will work. Pine straw will not work. Bales that are tightly packed work best.

Use bales with regular twine if you can, because the twine will rot along with the bale. Synthetic twine does not rot but will be OK. Shop around for bale prices.

Arrange your bales in rows so they can help hold each other together. Orienting the bales with strings on the ground works best.



A wide variety of vegetables (except top-heavy ones like corn), fruits and flowers can be planted in conditioned straw bales.



A layer of nursery mix, garden soil or compost on top creates a planting medium for seedlings and seeds.

If you make more than one row of bales, put them wide enough apart so your lawnmower can get between them. And because you'll be watering them, place bales where the water will drain away.

You can use seeds if you add some potting mix on top of the bales for germination. I transplant my vegetables directly into the bales.

It takes at least 10 days to prepare your bales.

Water the bales thoroughly for the first few days. Keep them moist from here on out.

In warm weather the bales will go through an internal heat process as decomposition starts. Once the inside of the bales doesn't feel warm to your hands you're ready to transplant.

I recommend some sort of liquid fertilizer. I use liquid Miracle Gro as needed.

You can set your bales out and start preparing them any time. The earlier the better as the bales will soften up more over time and make transplanting easier.

To transplant your veggies into the bales, use a trowel to help make a crack in the bale for each plant. Place the plant down to its first leaf. I like adding some potting mix to chink the crack around the plant. Close the crack back together.

How many plants per bale? Try 2 or 3 tomato plants, 3 peppers, 2 sets of squash, up to 4 cucumber sets, and 3 or 4 okra plants per bale.

Be prepared to stake or trellis any plant with a stalk. I recommend using a tall trellis for tomatoes. Tomatoes can easily get 8 feet tall.

I don't recommend corn with this method. They will get too top heavy.

The bales may start to sprout, but that is no problem. I give my bales a "haircut" every so often with a knife.

I don't have nearly the worms, bugs, or other pests as a traditional garden. But you can use pesticides or fungicides as needed.

At season's end you can use the bales for mulch, or bust them up and set new bales on them next year.

Kent Rogers of Wake Forest is a member of Wake Electric, a Touchstone Energy cooperative. You can contact him by mail at 13028 Powell Rd, Wake Forest, NC 27587, and by e-mail at kent.rogers@earthlink.net.

For additional information and a lot more photos
Visit Kent's online bale gardening thread at:
www.4042.com/4042forums/showthread.php?t=12405.

Spring into action

Spring gardening tips from the Carolina Country archives

Garden vegetables and fruits

- Cool-weather vegetable crops now being harvested should be followed by plantings of warm-weather ones like snap beans, squash, green beans, lima beans, okra, lettuce, tomatoes and beets.
- When setting tomato and green pepper plants, place collars around the bases to protect from cutworms. Plastic cups with bottoms removed make good collars.
- Stake tall-growing tomato plants, or place wire cages over them. As plants grow, secure them to the support with strips of sturdy cloth or discarded pantyhose.
- Vegetables can be used as part of the flower garden. For example, carrots to edge a flowerbed (the foliage gives a fern-like edging); strawberries as a low-edging plant or groundcover; cabbages backed with zinnias, with petunias in front.
- Plant green beans, cucumbers, squash and other warm season vegetables.
- Remove blooms from herbs to direct plant energy to produce foliage, not flowers.

Trees and shrubs

- The first spring is a critical time for newly-planted shrubs and trees. Water them deeply once or twice a week during dry periods.
- Most shrubs respond well to a general feeding of ¼- to ½-pound balanced plant food per square yard of area covered by plant. Do not permit fertilizer to touch stems or leaves. Distribute fertilizer evenly. If there is heavy mulch, or soil is badly packed, cultivate well. Water fertilizer into soil.
- Remove faded blooms when they appear on bedding plants and shrubs.
- Dig and transplant small seedlings of nandinas that have grown up under established plants. If established plants have grown tall and scraggly, cut away older, thicker stems at ground level.

Flowers

- When Easter lilies are in bloom, pluck the stamens to remove yellow pollen as soon as it is visible. This prevents ripening pollen from discoloring petals, making flowers last longer.
- Even shady spots can contribute summer color from annuals. The following endure somewhat heavy shade: petunia, balsam, calliopsis, godetia, lobelia, cockscomb, flowering tobacco, periwinkle and impatiens.
- Good bedding plants for bright sunny spots: portulaca, zinnia, marigold, salvia and celosia. Make massed plantings of zinnias, marigolds and petunias. These most popular of annuals contribute summer-long color accents.
- Plant an evergreen vine such as English ivy or Carolina jasmine along with clematis vine. This provides a green camouflage when clematis is bare of leaves in winter.
- As blooms fade, cut daffodils, tulips and hyacinths if not done earlier. Since foliage is manufacturing food for next year's growth, let it remain until leaves mature and turn brown or yellow.
- If daffodils multiply and become crowded clumps that produce little to no blooms, lift, divide and replant.

Lawn

- Apply lawn-weed prevention to keep crabgrass seeds from sprouting and becoming summer weeds.
- If large trees cast shade on the lawn and the shaded area is not planted with a groundcover, apply a complete fertilizer such as 6-12-12, 5-10-5, 8-8-8, or 12-6-6 at a rate of 30 to 35 pounds per 1,000 square feet. This relieves competition of trees and lawn grasses for nutrients.
- Fertilize summer grasses such as Zoysia, Bermuda and Centipede. Do not fertilize fescue until fall.
- Start groundcovers of liriope, Mondo grass and English ivy where grass refuses to grow.

Treatments

- Five tablespoons of bleach in a gallon of water, shaken well, will help prolong the life of cut flowers. Keep the vase full of solution.
- To attract hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies, include bee balm in flowerbeds.
- Fertilize azaleas with special azalea and camellia food, or use a balanced fertilizer like 8-8-8 or 10-10-10.
- Among good mulches for plants: pine needles, oak leaves, old sawdust, cotton and peanut hulls, shredded bark and bark chips, and peat moss that has been soaked in water for several hours.

One last tip

- If you enjoy feeding birds in winter, then plant a row of sunflowers in the back or side of your garden. These tall-growing annuals produce enormous heads of rich, oily seeds. In late summer when flowers have matured, cut and dry them. Next winter, these seed-studded disks will be a true delicacy for birds.

For more tips

Visit the Carolina Gardens section of our website: www.carolinacountry.com.

Grow a delicious landscape

Replace a strictly ornamental plant with one that is edible, or try incorporating annual and perennial herbs and vegetables into an already existing landscape

By John Bruce



The delicate, onion-like flavor of chives compliments salads, fish and soups while the purple flowers lend a lovely garnish.

Once gardens were planted out of sight for aesthetics, but the resurgence of a trend to use edible plants as ornamentals is reshaping the face of gardening. Planting produce in front yards and along walkways adds convenience and accessibility.

Simply put, edible landscaping puts food-producing ornamental plants in the home landscape. Most edible plants need well-drained soil and a minimum of six hours in full sun daily, but some tolerate partial shade. Make sure you pick the proper location.

Nasturtium, Jerusalem artichokes, Swiss chard, chives and daylilies are a few examples of commonly grown ornamental plants that double for attractive landscapes and the dinner table.

Here are four examples of tasty landscaping plants and recipes:

Often described as a plant to deter squash bugs, beetles and aphids, nasturtium is an annual or perennial flowering plant. Its attractive, edible flowers and leaves are eaten in salads and dressings.

Nasturtium Salad Dressing

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon salad oil
- ¼ teaspoon dry mustard
- 4 nasturtiums flowers
- Nasturtium leaves
- Pinch curry powder

Place all ingredients in blender for 45 seconds. Makes 1½ cups.

Fresh, young chard can be used raw in salads. Mature chard is typically sautéed. Bitterness in the leaves and stalks fades with cooking. Its refined flavor is more delicate than spinach.

Sautéed Swiss Chard

- 1 bunch Swiss chard
- 3 tablespoons virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
- Salt and pepper

Wash chard and remove stems. In a skillet, sauté garlic in olive oil. When garlic turns golden, add Swiss chard and sauté until wilted. Add tomato sauce and simmer 10 minutes. Salt and pepper to taste.

The violet blossoms of chives add a splash of color to any landscape. Chopped chive leaves are a delicate condiment for soups and other dishes, and the round tufted flowers are used as garnishes whole and broken apart in salads, cooked vegetables and casseroles. Regular picking encourages repeat blooms.

Asiago-Chive Biscuits

- 2 cups biscuit mix
- ⅔ cup 2 percent or skim milk
- ¼ cup melted butter
- ¾ cup grated Asiago cheese
- ½ cup finely chopped fresh chives

Toss ingredients in a large bowl. Turn out onto a floured surface. Roll to 1-inch thick. Cut into 12 squares. Space apart on a cookie sheet and bake at 400 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes.

Not to be confused with true lilies, daylilies grow from tuberous, fleshy roots rather than bulbs. Daylilies have been eaten for centuries in Asia where they originated. The tuber-like roots can be eaten raw or added to salads, soups and stews. The flavor is similar to asparagus. The buds and blossoms are the sweetest parts. Raw or boiled, stir-fried or steamed, they can be eaten with other vegetables. With their savory taste and gelatinous consistency, the blossoms add a flowery zest to soups and vegetable dishes.

Stuffed Daylilies

- 1 cup diced cooked chicken
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 3-ounce package cream cheese (softened)
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ½ teaspoon lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons ranch dressing

Mix well. Fills approximately 8 large or 12 small daylily blossoms.

John Bruce is a professional writer who gardens in Columbia, S.C.

Portable sawmills can help farm woodlots yield multiple benefits

Public Policy Perspectives
by Jack and Clayton Petree



The portable sawmill is a source of revenue and serves as a smart management tool for treed farmland and woodlots.

Farmers and other rural landowners can find the trees on the "Back Forty" to be an important resource, helping to improve a farm's financial stability, even in times of economic stress. That's because a new kind of tool—the thin kerf portable band sawmill—is expanding the landscape of the American farm allowing farmers to selectively harvest and mill their own trees for profit. Thin kerf sawmilling has made the woodlot another "field" that produces a sustainable crop, available when time and need dictate.

The widespread availability of thin kerf sawmills means that for a small investment, often less than the cost of the pickup truck that transports the mill, one or two people with minimal training can consistently produce quality lumber from logs and other tree parts that commercial mills might find unacceptable. The mills can be towed to the site of a tree stand, minimizing the need for log handling. Set up is a 15- or 20-minute task.

Making the most of an existing resource

In northeastern Ohio, Ralph Rice rejuvenated a 73-acre homestead into a diversified, efficient and profitable farming operation. Annually, he raises about 20 feeder cattle, 40 feeder pigs and over 50 Katahdin ewes. Rice grows corn, hay and maintains a large garden. Over half of his 73 acres supports a second-growth stand of trees containing a variety of species.

When Ralph Rice decided to build a roadside stand, he hired a sawmill owner to cut lumber from his logs to use in the building. Later, when he planned to build other new farm buildings for his operation, Rice calculated that he could pay for his own portable band sawmill with the savings he would realize by milling lumber from his own trees by himself. He decided to buy his own mill.

Ralph Rice's woodlot became a ready source of needed building materials, as well as a source of revenue. "My trees now are standing lumber," he says, "a much more valuable resource than firewood."

Rice also provides sawmilling services to other woodlot owners, so the forest enhancements are seen throughout his community.

Environmental benefits are a bonus

By reducing the need to transport logs, and by processing trees with minimal commercial value, Ralph Rice and thousands of farmers like him lower the impact on the natural environment. Milling raw tree parts that otherwise would be left to decompose, burn or be processed into chips reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Trees converted to lumber and durable wood products retain the carbon sequestered in them for the life of the lumber. Lumber recovered from "scrap" material also replaces harvest from healthy forests leaving healthy trees standing and continuing to "scrub" carbon from the air. Thin kerf technology also helps to increase the amount of lumber produced from a given volume of logs by as much as 30 percent, so even more carbon is sequestered as more lumber and less sawdust result.

Public Policy Perspectives focuses on helping businesses promote "practical environmentalism," while maintaining profitability. www.publicpolicyperspectives.org.

North Carolina Resources

Joe Freeman owns and manages a 130-acre Christmas tree farm in Ashe County, as well a wreath and greenery woodlot in Moore County and a fir plantation in Virginia. The National Christmas Tree Association selected him as the national grand champion in 2007, when his Fraser fir tree graced the Blue Room in the White House. He owns two thin kerf portable sawmills to manage his forest lands for health and profitability.

Visit Mistletoe Meadows at www.mistletoemeadows.com or by phone at (336) 982-9754.

Woodlot owners also can learn more about woodlot management from North Carolina Cooperative Extension's Forest Resources division at www.ces.ncsu.edu.

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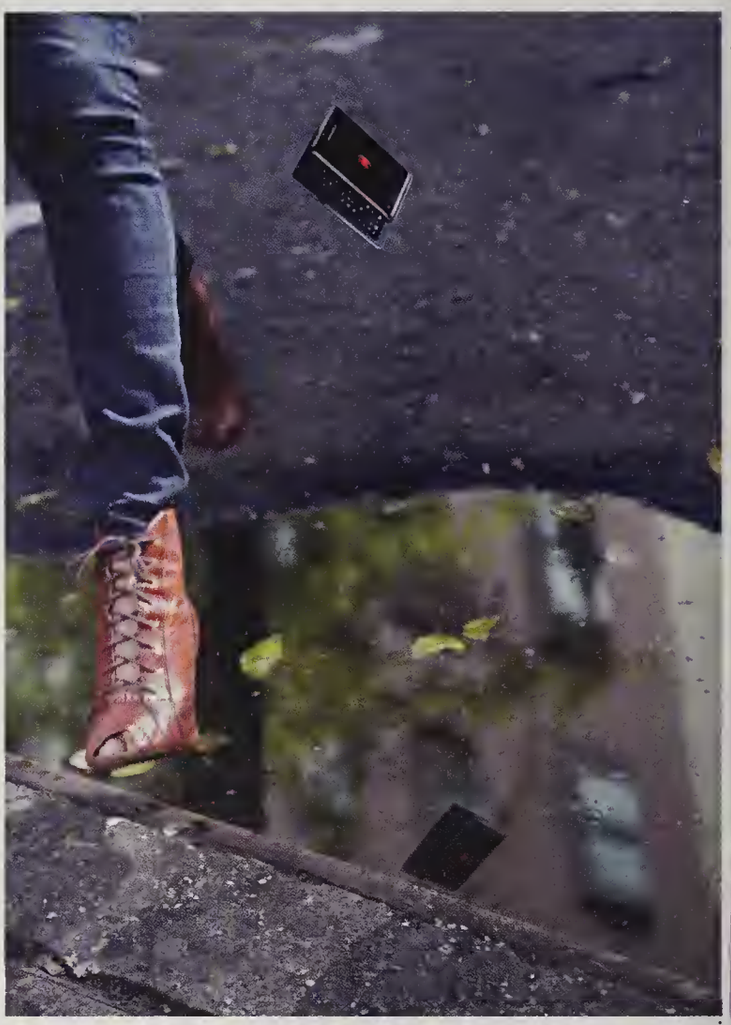
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Lost your cell phone? Prevent misuse with these tips

Reaching for your mobile phone, only to find it isn't where you thought it was, can bring a quick flash of panic. When you realize that it's lost, or even stolen, the stress levels really begin to rise. Don't think it could happen to you? The experience is more common than you may think.



This year, they project that 1 in 4 people will lose, damage or have their cell phone stolen.

Asurion, a technology protection company, estimates that 60 million cell phones are lost, stolen or damaged each year. This year, they project that 1 in 4 people will lose, damage or have their cell phone stolen.

If you lose your phone, or suspect that it's been stolen, what should you do? CTIA, an international association for the wireless telecommunications industry, recommends immediately contacting your carrier and telling them to turn off your phone so you're not responsible for charges. Some carriers will let you do this online, while others may require a phone call. You should also contact the police to file a report on the theft, and if the device is covered under your homeowner's policy, file a claim through your insurance.

How to prevent misuse

CTIA also has these tips to prevent your device from being misused if it's lost or stolen:

- Use the security features on your device.
- Use the personalization feature and put your name and a different phone number so that if someone finds your device, you can be contacted for its return.
- Keep a back-up of your contacts, calendar, and other information somewhere else, such as your computer.
- If you have a tendency to lose things, you may want to consider mobile phone insurance. Make sure you understand what the plan does and does not cover, and that you don't buy redundant coverage—your home, renter's or auto insurance may also cover phone replacement.

Apps for locating phones

There are also apps (short for applications that you can put on your phone) available that may help you find your phone if it is lost. For example, Asurion's Mobile Recovery is a web- and phone-based app that can help Verizon Wireless customers in the event they temporarily lose or misplace their phones. Compatible with Blackberry, Palm, Android and Windows Mobile phones, the apps' features include locating the phone by GPS if the missing phone is powered on and within locating range, and then providing directions to the phone's location. The app also has a sound alarm that lets you know where the phone is in your house, and allows you to protect your privacy by remotely erasing contacts from your phone.

WaveSecure, made by McAfee, is an Android security app for the android-based Motorola Droid, HTC Eris, Magic, Hero and G1 phones that can remotely lock down your cell phone and wipe out important data stored on your mobile to protect your privacy. Android security apps also include Antivirus Pro, which provides ongoing scanning to protect against viruses and malware, as well as services for identifying phone locations. There are also apps available for various types of cell phones that block spam calls and unwanted texts.

Check with your carrier or browse your phone's apps list to see if any security apps are already offered for your phone's total package. You can also search the Web with words like "protect your cell phone" to see what's on the market and compatible with your phone.

—Family Features.com

Building a new house?

Balance efficiency with comfort

By James Dulley



Deltec Homes

This efficient house construction method uses many insulated wall panels and self-supporting roof trusses.

When building a new house, it is wise to think about the livability of a house in addition to efficiency measures. While building a small, simple house with thick insulation and very few windows would save energy, it likely would not suit most typical American families. You should balance a home's energy efficiency with comfort and convenience.

The typical "to-code" stick-built house—a home constructed entirely or largely on-site—is not very energy efficient, but this does not necessarily mean all stick-built homes are inefficient. With adequate (more than to-code) insulation, high-quality windows and doors, and attention to construction details such as sealing vapor/air barriers, a typical lumber-framed house can be very efficient.

Several new construction methods are inherently much more efficient than a rectangular lumber stick-built house. These methods include round panelized, geodesic dome, steel-framing, foam block/concrete, structural insulated panels (SIPS), and post-and-beam houses.

A round house provides the greatest amount of indoor floor space with the least amount of exterior wall surface area. Since heat loss (or gain) from a house is directly related to wall surface area, less wall area results in less potential loss. Also, wind tends to flow smoothly over the exterior, which results in fewer air leaks.

A circular panelized house, such as ones made by Deltec Homes (www.deltechomes.com), uses a series of 8-foot wide flat panels to create the round house. These panels are made specifically to house plans and delivered to a building site ready to assemble. A combination of insulation inside the hollow panels and thick foam sheathing on the exterior results in a high level of insulation.

The roof is self-supporting, using trusses. This provides the opportunity to have an open floor plan, an efficiency advantage with solar or other alternative heating methods.

Geodesic dome houses are the ultimate in circular design for the least overall exterior surface area, but the interior living space is quite different from a typical house. The most efficient and strongest ones are made of a combination of triangular foam pieces covered with concrete. Both circular panelized and dome houses are inherently resistant to damage from severe weather such as hurricanes.

Steel-framed houses provided by businesses like Kodiak Steel Homes (www.kodiaksteelhomes.com) are very energy efficient. Since the steel members replace the lumber, these houses can look almost identical to a standard stick-built lumber house (except the walls may look noticeably thicker at window and door openings).

The most efficient steel-framed houses use large steel-framing members (called red iron) spaced very far apart. The steel members are very strong, so the house stays airtight without the settling typical with lumber framing.

Foam block houses are assembled somewhat similar to hollow Legos. The lightweight foam blocks are stacked on top of one another to create the walls. When stacked together, open channels are created throughout the blocks. A concrete truck pumps concrete into the top of the wall and it flows throughout the wall. The foam blocks provide super-high insulation levels. This method offers a very strong wall and much architectural design flexibility, and the homeowner can easily help with the basic construction.

SIPS are very strong panels with thick insulating foam in the center. They are also called stress skin panels because the interior and exterior skins provide the structural strength for the house. These long panels are factory-crafted to fit your house plans. Standard form core wall panels are similar except the skins are not strong enough to be self-supporting. These panels are often attached over attractive post-and-beam framing, which supports the house.

Have a question for Jim?
Send inquiries to:
James Dulley, Carolina Country,
6906 Royalgreen Dr.,
Cincinnati, OH 45244
www.dulley.com

James Dulley is an engineer and syndicated columnist for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

A major spotlight on stuttering and therapy

For the first time in a major motion picture, "The King's Speech" presents a leading character who stutters.

Starring Colin Firth as the British King George VI and Helena Bonham Carter as his wife Elizabeth, "The King's Speech" tells the story of Prince Albert, who stuttered badly and never dreamed that he would ever be king when his older brother, King Edward VIII, abruptly abdicated the throne in 1936 to marry Wallis Simpson, an American divorcee.

The movie's producer Iain Canning said, "His brother was famously charming and Bertie was considered the dull-witted one with little charisma." When Prince Albert, who was known as Bertie, ascended to the throne to become King George VI, it is an understatement to say that his life changed drastically.

The film deals with George VI's stuttering and his relationship with Lionel Logue, played by Geoffrey Rush in the film, an Australian speech therapist retained by the prince to help him overcome his stuttering in the years before, during and after the 1936 abdication by his older brother.

Logue's practice began in Australia treating shell-shocked World War I veterans experiencing speech difficulties, and he moved his family to London to continue his practice there. In their therapy sessions, Logue inspired his famous patient mentally by assuring him that his stammering could be cured and that there was nothing psychologically wrong with him.

The sessions with Logue greatly improved the Prince's confidence as well as his actual speech. When, to the surprise of the world, Prince Albert abruptly became King George VI, the new king's stuttering was heavy on his mind from the beginning as he knew that regular radio broadcasts and many more public more appearances would put him and his speech in the spotlight.



King George VI, whose live broadcasts of hope and inspiration kept the spirits of the British people alive during the dark days of World War II, met the challenge of stuttering with courage.

Colin Firth assessed the situation by saying, "His only job was to speak for the nation on live radio—I mean, how cruel was that? ...there is no recording yet, there is no editing for radio... this is live to the Empire."

King George VI reigned from 1937 until his death in 1952. Throughout that time, he remained friends with his therapist and confidante Lionel Logue. He is remembered as the king whose live broadcasts of hope and inspiration kept the spirits of the British people alive during the dark days of World War II.

For more information, go to www.stutteringhelp.org.

—The Stuttering Foundation of America

About Stuttering

- More than 3 million Americans stutter.
- Stuttering affects four times as many males as females.
- Despite decades of research, no clear-cut answers have emerged about the causes of stuttering.
- People who stutter are self-conscious about their stuttering and often let the disability determine their vocation.
- There are no quick miracle cures for stuttering. Therapy can take up to six months.
- A quarter of all children go through a stage of speech development with severe enough problems to concern their parents.
- Stuttering becomes more of a problem as a child becomes a teenager.
- Famous people who stutter have included Winston Churchill, Marilyn Monroe, Mel Tillis, Carly Simon, James Earl Jones and John Updike.
- If you are seeking therapy for your child with a stuttering problem, it's best to look for a speech-language pathologist who specializes in stuttering.

For more information, go to **www.stutteringhelp.org.**

EASY SALADS

By Katie Martin



You always talk about eating more salads, but every time you begin, you get bored after a week or two. It doesn't have to be that way. Salads can be simple, different and exciting. Try at least one new salad a week.

Spinach Salad

- 1 bag fresh spinach
- 2 hard-boiled eggs
- ½ cup white raisins
- ½ cup walnut pieces
- ½ cup red onion, cut to bite-size pieces
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Cucumber ranch or blue cheese dressing

Wash the spinach and drain. Place spinach and hard-boiled eggs in a bowl with lid. Add ½ cup white raisins, ½ cup walnut pieces, ½ cup of bite-size pieces of red onion. Drizzle with cucumber ranch dressing or blue cheese dressing (see recipe for making your own). Put lid on bowl and shake well. Place in refrigerator until next day, then shake again before serving.

Broccoli Salad

- 1 head broccoli
- ½ red onion, cut to bite-size pieces
- ½ cup pecan pieces (or walnuts or almonds)
- ½ cup dark raisins
- Cucumber ranch dressing

Wash broccoli. Break or cut head into small pieces. Put in dish with top (I use a plastic bowl with top). Add red onion to broccoli. Add ½ cup of pecans and ½ cup of raisins. Drizzle lightly with cucumber ranch dressing. Put lid on bowl and shake until mixed. Place in refrigerator until next day, then shake again before serving.

Buttermilk Blue Cheese Dressing

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup crumbled blue cheese

Mix ingredients with a mixer until desired consistency is reached. Refrigerate at least two hours before serving.

Pears and Blue

Refrigerate 1 large can of pears for at least 2 hours. Use 2 pears per serving. Sprinkle with crumbled blue cheese. Serve on salad greens if desired. The secret to this salad is having cold pears.

Flavored Slaw

Shred as much cabbage as you need. Mix lightly with Thousand Island dressing. Chill before serving.

Asparagus and More

Drain a can of cut asparagus and chill. When chilled, place asparagus on salad greens of your choice. Sprinkle with crumbled bacon. Drizzle lightly with French dressing. For variation, add sliced tomato and cut scallions.

Apricots With Walnuts

Drain a can of apricots and chill. When chilled, place apricots on salad greens of your choice. Sprinkle salad with shredded walnuts. Add a touch of whipped cream or whipped topping (or yogurt).

Ambrosia

Slice 1 banana. Slice 1 peeled orange (seeds removed). Place the fruit on a plate and sprinkle with coconut.

Peach Halves Salad

Drain 1 can of peach halves, and place them on a baking dish with cut side of peach facing up. Place 1 pat of butter on each peach half. Sprinkle with brown sugar and cinnamon. Broil until done. Serve peaches hot on mixed greens.

Warm Pea Salad

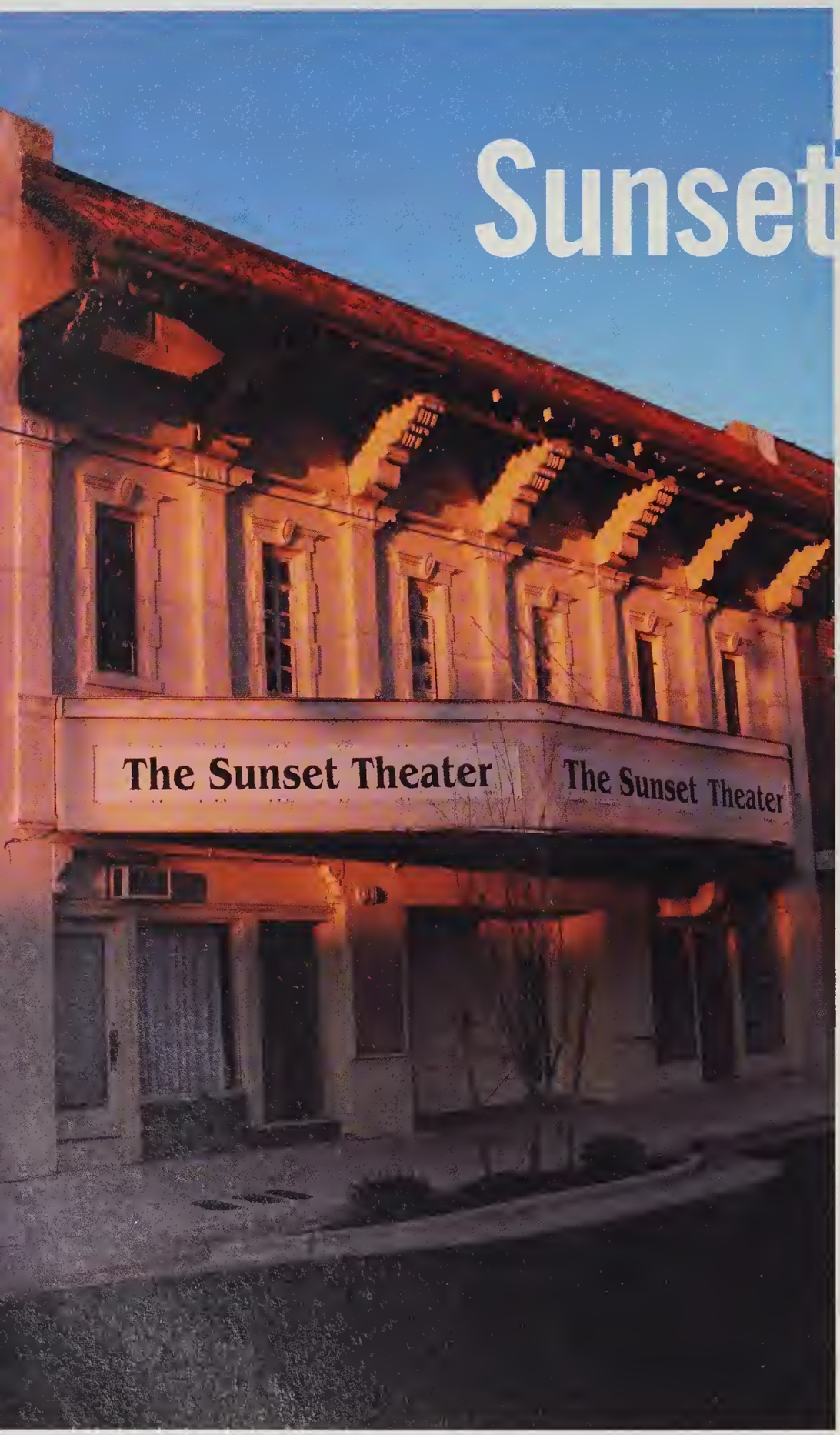
Cook 1 box of frozen peas and drain. Sprinkle with 3 tablespoons of sharp cheddar cheese. Serve warm over cottage cheese and salad green.

Cabbage Pineapple Salad

Chop as much cabbage as you need. Add ½ cup drained pineapple (or fresh pineapple). Add ½ cup raisins. Mix everything with mayonnaise until it reaches desired consistency. Sprinkle lightly with fresh ground pepper.

Katie Martin lives in Stokes County.





Sunset Theater

Photography by Ashley Fetner

Built in 1929 by the Cox family, the Sunset was the first movie theater in Asheboro. It was built in a Spanish Colonial style with beamed ceilings, stucco walls and an awning with a tile roof—all very popular in Hollywood in the 1920s.

The Sunset operated as a movie theater from March 6, 1930, until 1969. It was re-opened in the 1970s as the Flick and closed for movies in 1981. Over the years the theater was used for a church and the George Washington Carver Enrichment Center.

Today it is owned by the city of Asheboro and operated by Asheboro Parks & Recreation. The Sunset hosts plays, concerts and the monthly Sunset Classic Film Series that showcases classic movies. It is also home to the Randolph Children's Theater as well as the RSVP Community Theater, both affiliated with the Randolph Arts Guild. There are plans in the works for enlarging and renovating the theater.

Sunset Theater is located on (where else?) Sunset Avenue, Asheboro.
www.sunsettheatre.org

—Kay Fetner

Ashley and Kay Fetner are members of Randolph EMC. www.ashleyfetnerportraits.com

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I Remember...



Mama's last garden

Mama was healthy for 85½ years and tended at least 65 gardens in Craven County before a series of mini-strokes beginning in early spring of 2005 forced her to give up home and garden. Knowing this would be her last garden, I captured a precious memory by snapping this picture of her picking beans in the summer of 2005. She finished harvesting her garden (with a little help from her children) and entered an assisted living facility in August of that same year. What happened to all the vegetables Minnie T. Wiggins froze and canned? She gave them to her children, of course. We made soups and casseroles for our special lunch dates with her.

Judith Phelps, Morehead City, Carteret-Craven Electric

The pretty doll

When I was growing up, we would go down to the Sandhills to pull tobacco plants. The next day we would plant them in the field. We farmed and didn't have much money to spend. When I was about 7 years old, I wanted a baby doll and it was getting close to Christmas. My daddy went to the tobacco market with some tobacco to sell. It was late when he got home, and I was asleep. He woke me up to give me that doll. It was so pretty that I wouldn't play with it, because I didn't want to mess it up. I would take it out of the box and just look at it and put it back. I kept it new until I left home. My youngest sister got it and tore it up.



I am with my two younger sisters.

Shirley DeBoad, Siler City, Central EMC

The Southern Living Show

I remember when The Southern Living Show came to Charlotte each March. I first went when I was 10 or 11. I lived in Mint Hill, a quiet town just outside of Charlotte, and the only entertainment we had was what we created ourselves. We looked forward to this show for months in advance. It was a huge home and garden show managed by Southern Shows out of Raleigh. The Charlotte show in 1962 was when the 80,000 square foot Charlotte Merchandise Mart first opened and about 12,000 people attended.

The fathers of two of my friends worked as exhibitors, so my friends and I could go a couple of times during the 10-day period. It was incredible to smell fresh flowers and see spring displays. By March we were all tired of cold weather and ready for spring.

In addition, it was a time of freedom for us. We felt very grown up looking at exhibits on our own. We got to know exhibitors and looked for them, like homecoming week.

I saved my allowance all year to buy souvenirs at the show, and an ice cream cone, a piece of Helmuts strudel and cinnamon covered pecans.

In my teens, 20s and 30s, it became a tradition that my mother and I would go together. Now for the past nine or 10 years, my daughter and I have gone. The Southern Show has grown and is now called The Spring Show. About 60,000 people attended in 2010. I still enjoy it, but I don't feel the same excitement as I did when I was very young.

Cheryl Ollis, Mint Hill, Union Power Cooperative

The big girl's bicycle

It must have been about 1979 when our daughter wanted a big girl's bicycle (with training wheels). She was about 4 years old, and her daddy got up with his younger brother, Ross. They went into Morehead City to buy the big girl's bicycle. They also had to make the annual Christmas stop at the ABC liquor store.

Well, they found the bicycle that they knew she would be proud of, so my husband purchased it. The only problem was it would have to be assembled. So, Christmas Eve around the hour of 1 a.m., my husband and his brother proceeded to put the "beautiful pink bicycle" together.

At about 3:30, I awoke to the sound of them cheerfully asking each other, "Why do we have extra pieces?"

When I came into the living room, they seemed pleasantly intoxicated. I asked, "What is going on?" My husband looked up and said with a boyish grin, "We have about 10 extra bolts and nuts left over."

Well, needless to say, I tucked them both in, returned to the living room and about an hour later, I had found the places for all the "extra parts" they seemed to miss. Our daughter never knew just how silly her daddy and her uncle had gotten trying to put that bicycle together.

Judy Rhodes, Newport, Carteret-Craven Electric

My brother's early start

Here is my brother, Earl Wells, in 1948 with our maternal grandfather, Jack Bloodworth, at the yearly hog killing in Willard, N.C. Who knew that 32 years later he would own and operate Wells Pork Products in Pender County. If you live in eastern North Carolina, you probably have visited or heard of this business. Unfortunately, my brother passed away in 2002. He used recipes from our grandparents and parents to make sausage, liver pudding, barbecue and other pork products that he sold. He also produced a line of barbecue sauce that is sold in many grocery stores today.



n Willard, 1948

Bonnie Wells Hall, Leland, Four County EMC

Joey's job



Our son Joey loved the outdoors. We remember him saying on rainy days, "I hope it slows down. I can't stand to be inside all day." He loved riding four-wheelers, jeeps and boats. Anything to be outdoors.

When he graduated from college he wanted to find the perfect job, one he would enjoy and be outdoors. A few months later he was hired to read meters for Randolph EMC in Robbins. He absolutely loved it. Later, Joey became a lineman and was so happy in his work. He always looked forward to being on call after working hours. His excitement filled our home. We can still remember the sound of his beeper. The time of night didn't bother him. He would quickly rouse and head out the door.

Hurricane Katrina was the last storm Joey worked, helping co-ops in Mississippi. He loved every minute of it. We remember him saying, "Daddy, you'd like the people in Mississippi. They're a lot like you."

Joey loved life. He always put God first, and his faith was evident in his daily work. God called him home in November of 2005. We miss him so much and have the same faith Joey lived through every day. We know the next time we see his big humble smile we'll be in Heaven.

We appreciate all the employees of Randolph EMC and the great job they do for all of us.

Darrell and Kathy Welch, Robbins, Randolph EMC

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Taken in 1974, this image documents the last steam locomotive to cross over the bridge. The occasion was a one-way excursion trip between Richmond and Raleigh sponsored by the Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. (Van Camp, "Edenton and Chowan County")

THE LONGEST CONTINUOUS RAILROAD BRIDGE IN THE WORLD

The eastern North Carolina bridge across Albemarle Sound cost $1 million to build in 1910 and lasted 76 years.

By Fred W. Harrison

While its historical impact is too often overlooked, the 1910 opening of the Norfolk & Southern Railroad Bridge across the Albemarle Sound marked a significant milestone in the economic and industrial development of eastern North Carolina.

An engineering triumph of its day, the 5-mile-long trestle cost more than $1 million dollars to build, a mammoth sum for the time, and was hailed as the longest continuous railroad bridge in the world.

Expansion of what evolved as the Norfolk & Southern Railroad into North Carolina began in 1881, along a path from Norfolk, Va., through Elizabeth City, Edenton and across the Albemarle Sound via transfer barges to points south. The transfer barges were first put into operation on June 1, 1891. Pulled by tugboats, these vessels could only handle two railroad cars per barge, making the task of delivering an entire train from shore to shore a very slow process.

A revolution of sorts took place in 1899, when the steamer John W. Garrett was ushered into service. The Garrett, a truly superlative train ferry by all accounts, was capable of carrying 23 loaded freight cars. The 351-foot vessel with 41-foot beam had a double pilot house, eliminating having to turn it around when docking. Passengers also enjoyed the advantages of an onboard restaurant, making the 1 hour, 45-minute trek one of the most favored excursions along the route.

The improved ferry service likewise added much to the growth of Edenton and Mackey's Ferry in Washington County as major ports for water traffic along the Albemarle Sound.

"WITHOUT A GIVE OR A TREMBLE"

By 1906, railroad officials had come to the conclusion that the enormous potential for increased traffic over the sound would not be practical with the aid of another transfer steamer and as such began preparations for the construction of a 28,000-foot bridge.

Work was begun on July 20, 1907, but was discontinued on Nov. 18 of that year due to lack of funds. Under direction of a federal judge, the project was refinanced with the issuance of receiver's certificates, though work did not resume course until Feb. 20, 1909.

According to an account from the Charlotte Daily Observer from Jan. 20, 1910:

> The completion of the Albemarle Sound Bridge has required more than three hundred cars of lumber, nearly one thousand cars of piles and two hundred and fifty cars of steel, a train load of spikes and bolts and exactly three hundred and sixty-five days of active labor. The piles used in the construction of the bridge were all in excess of seventy feet in length, the longest being ninety-five feet. These were driven into the bed of the sound forty to sixty feet, and no other fact is needed to give assurance as to the stability of the structure. At high tide the deck of the bridge is thirteen feet, two inches above water.
>
> The bridge was equipped with one Scherzer roller-lift draw with 140 feet of open space and one swing draw with clearance of 35 feet on either side.
>
> On New Year's Day 1910, a train carrying company officials made the first crossing over the structure, the bridge opening up for regular traffic a couple of weeks later on January 17th.

It appears from newspaper reports of the time that the bridge project had not come without some home resistance. On Jan. 8, 1910, the Charlotte Daily Observer noted:

> The Greenville Reflector "wonders if there was not premeditation in running that barge against the bridge" of the Norfolk & Southern Railroad over Albemarle Sound the other day, wrecking several feet. There was much local opposition to the building of the bridge, but we would find it hard to believe that there was deliberate intent to destroy it. That bridge...cost an immense sum of money and it adds greatly to the convenience of traffic in the northeastern part of the state.
>
> A reporter once described his ride over the newly built bridge as being "without a give or a tremble, though the sound of the waters were rough and rolling...There remained with us at all times a sense of perfect security, but it made nervous women hold handkerchiefs over their eyes and grab their seats with hands—as if it would aid the bridge in accomplishing its work."

For many years, untreated timber used in the bridge's construction required continuous maintenance. The railroad operated numerous shops, warehouses, sawmills, etc., on both sides of the structure to provide the necessary support to keep both trains and trestle in running order.



Named for Baltimore railroad magnate John W. Garrett, the Garrett ferried trains across Albemarle Sound between Edenton and Mackey's from 1899–1909. (Van Camp, "Edenton and Chowan County")

For whatever reason, by the 1950s, needed repairs had become less frequent. In July 1957, a northbound train of 77 cars was about halfway across the trestle when the pilings of one section gave way, sending the train's two diesel engines, a mail car and two passenger cars plunging into 20 feet of water. Two deaths resulted from the accident. A report later stated that the Interstate Commerce Commission had been warned as early as 1952 of the trestle's hazardous condition and lack of oversight.

Though significant safety improvements would be made with additional challenges brought on by weather and storms, changing patterns of business activity would eventually dictate the final chapter of the landmark's history.

By 1986, the expense to maintain the then 78-year old bridge had grown to such an extent that Norfolk & Southern could no longer justify keeping it. The firm estimated nearly $19 million at the time to rehabilitate it to serve an area producing less than $500,000 annually in operating costs.

Still touted as one of the largest rail spans of its kind in the country, the bridge was finally closed on Jan. 3, 1987. Traffic was rerouted through Greensboro and Lynchburg, Va.

Since demolished, only high-voltage power lines and pylons set alongside the bridge remain to mark its path, visible reminders of an ever evolving landscape.

Fred Harrison is on staff with the Langford North Carolina Collection, a repository and cultural heritage archive for eastern North Carolina located in East Carolina University's J.Y. Joyner Library.

FURTHER READING

For additional information about the culture and heritage surrounding Albemarle Sound's famed railroad bridge read "Washington County, NC: A Tapestry," edited by Betsy Modlin; Louis Van Camp's "Edenton and Chowan County," and Bob Spruill's article for the Norfolk & Southern Historical Society titled "Norfolk & Southern Railroad at Mackey's Ferry." Also visit East Carolina University's Joyner Library's North Carolina Collection at www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/ncc.

"Edenton and Chowan County" is available from Arcadia Publishing at www.arcadiapublishing.com or by calling (888) 313-2665.

WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS?



This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by March 8 with your name, address and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: where@carolinacountry.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
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The winner, chosen at random and announced in our April issue, will receive $25.

February winner

The February photo (by Doug Van de Zande) showed the cabin at Chicora Cemetery, Averasboro Battlefield, between Erwin and Godwin in Harnett County. The battlefield commemorates a March 1865 Civil War battle. Chicora Cemetery contains remains of the Confederate dead. The grounds and related programs are maintained by the private, non-profit Averasboro Battlefield Commission. Visit www.averasboro.com. The winner, chosen at random from all the correct entries, is Joyce Johnson of Autryville, a member of South River EMC.



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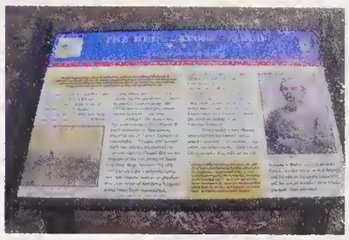


T.W. Johnson art

Oil paintings by artist T.W. Johnson of Hillsborough show colorful and illuminating scenes and landscapes of North Carolina. Prints and reproductions on paper, canvas and aluminum are available for most images, and he also offers note cards and glass coasters on his website. Johnson, a Piedmont EMC member, also provides framing, and he makes all his frames from different woods collected from old houses and barns that are being renovated or torn down. For giclée prints of signed limited editions, sizes available are an 11-by-4 image mounted in a 16-by-20 white matte or 8-by-16 image mounted in a 16-by-20 white matte, either for $60. For custom sets of note cards, you select the images from his website. A set of eight 4.25-by-5.5 note cards with matching envelopes costs $15 (plus shipping).

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www.twjohnsonart.com

12 new Civil War Trail markers



North Carolina's 12 newest Civil War Trails markers are among nearly 200 in the state, and part of a network including Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee. The signs, adorned with a red bugle under blue Civil War Trails lettering, can lead history buffs on a motor tour across the state and region. The latest additions are in Alamance, Cabarrus, Cumberland, Duplin and Gates counties, and contribute to the observance of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. The sites commemorate the Gates County militia, a Kenansville raid, Freedom's Hill Wesleyan Methodist Church in Alamance County, several incidents from the Carolinas Campaign by Union Gen. William T. Sherman and other stories of sacrifice and heroism. Look for other new information and observances of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War to be issued this year by the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources.

www.civilwartrails.org
www.nccivilwar150.com

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on the bookshelf

Death of a Pinehurst Princess



A news media frenzy hurled the quiet resort community of Pinehurst into the national spotlight in 1935 when hotel magnate Ellsworth Statler's adopted daughter was discovered dead early one February morning, just weeks after her wedding. A politically charged coroner's inquest failed to determine a definitive cause of death, and the following civil action exposed sordid details of the couple's lives. More than half a century later, the story was all but forgotten when local resident Diane McLellan spied an old photograph at a yard sale and became obsessed with solving the mystery. Her enthusiastic sleuthing captured the attention of the book's author Steve Bouser, a journalist in Southern Pines. Bouser takes readers back to those blustery winter days long ago in the quest to reveal what really happened in the mysterious death of Elva Statler Davidson. Softcover, 208 pages, $19.99.

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Fishing North Carolina



Ready for a new fishing hole? "Fishing North Carolina" covers fishing opportunities in all of the state's regions: mountains, Piedmont and coastal plain. The new book takes much of the guesswork out of planning fishing excursions and has something for both beginning and advanced anglers and longtime North Carolinians and tourists alike. It can lead you to uncrowded sites you may not have thought of and also tell you what to expect there. Fishing North Carolina provides information about the species of fish anglers are interested in, where to find it and, most importantly, how to catch it. For example, are you looking for the notoriously finicky spotted sea trout? The book says that Cape Hatteras National Seashore might be a good bet and advises for you to bring live shrimp for bait. It also includes detailed directions to each locale, 60 maps, and information on nearby campsites and facilities, as well as what fishing regulations are in effect, the best time to fish and the best way to fish (from boat, dock or shore). Softcover, 352 pages, $19.95.

(800) 222-9796
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(800) 437-3959
www.brightmountainbooks.com

You can reach Charles Joyner by e-mail: joyner@carolinacountry.com

digit DETECTION

$(EN)^2=NJOS$

The square of the two digit number EN equals the four digit number NJOS. The digits represented by J O N E S are sequential in ascending order.

Given this information, can you find the value of JONES County?

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++_+_+_=__

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Find the Value of

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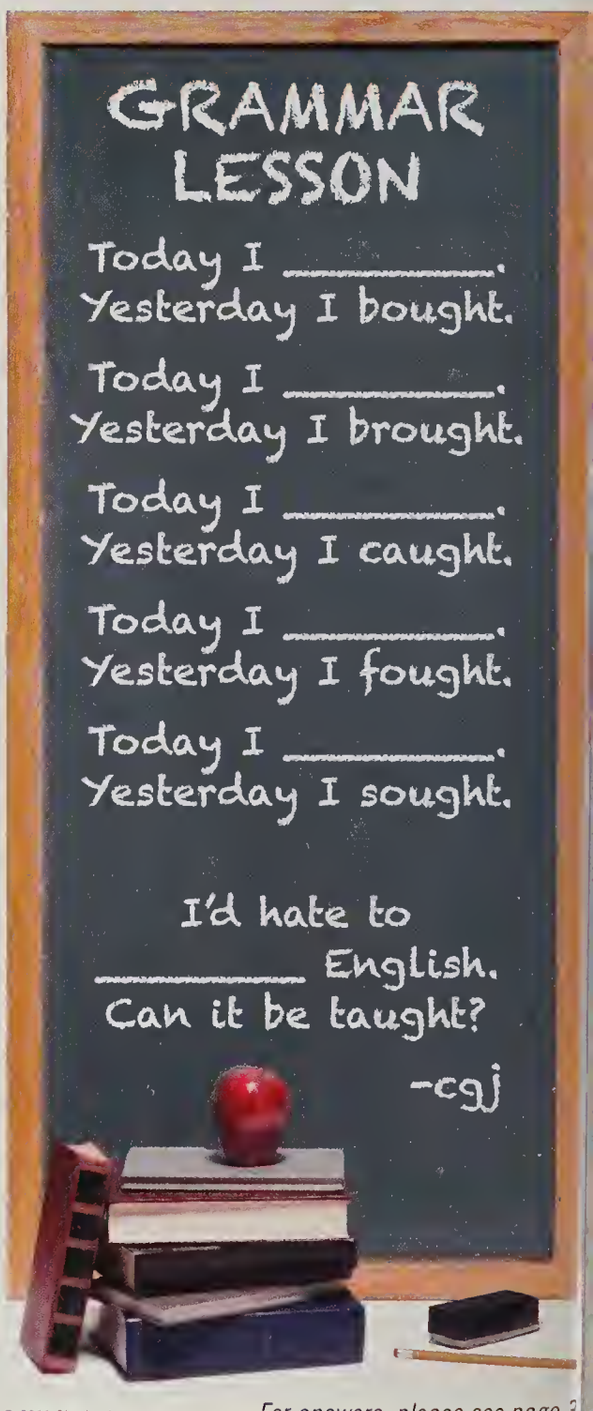
— — — — — — — — ——

Richmond County, on North Carolina's South Carolina border, is home to the townships of Rockingham, Hamlet and Ellerbe. Each of the eight letters in RICHMOND has been given a different value from 1 through 8. Given the total value of the letters in each of the eight words below, can you find the value of each letter? A=9

CHARM	(30)	CHAIN	(27)	CHORD	(27)	DRAIN	(25)
HARD	(23)	AIR	(20)	RAM	(19)		

Oh, Henry!





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For answers, please see page 3



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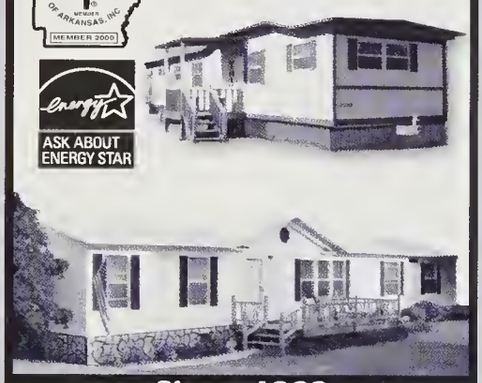
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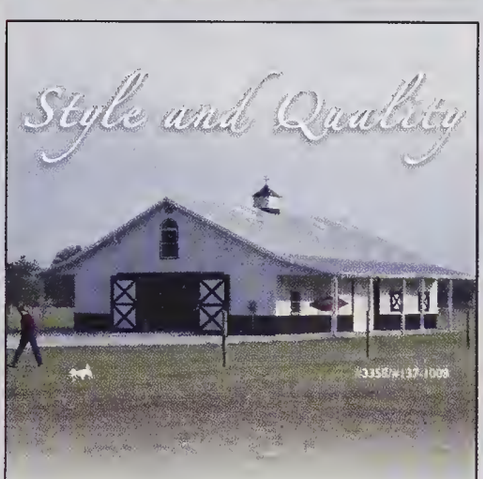


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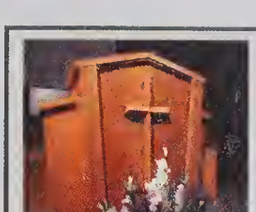
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www.fallingriversgallery.com

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www.theartscouncil.org

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Hendersonville
(828) 693-9708
www.historichendersonville.org

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Midway
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www.headwatersoutfitters.com

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(704) 337-2000
www.mintmuseum.org

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www.newbernhistorical.org

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6

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8

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www.beauforthistoricsite.org

10

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www.downeastfolkarts.org

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CAROLINA COUNTRY adventures

Hamlet, Ellerbe & Rockingham

Day Trip

Dubbed the "Little Town That Could," Hamlet possesses significant railway history. About an hour east of Charlotte, this Richmond County town of about 6,000 grew up around an historical, key railway hub. Landmarks include the grand Hamlet Passenger Depot, built in 1900. One of the most photographed train stations in the U.S., the "Depot," as locals call it, was designed in the Queen Anne version of Victorian architecture. It's a real pleasure to view the active station's pointed "Witch Hat" dome and other lavish details. (Amtrak offers daily runs here on its Silver Star line, either to Florida or to New York.)

Step across the the street to see the Tornado, the first steam engine locomotive in North Carolina. Built in 1839, it was briefly captured by Union soldiers during the Civil War, but eventually repatriated. The building in which it resides also houses a 1927 Model-T, a 1930 Model-A Ford and a 1949 fire engine. Then stroll three blocks north to explore the National Railroad Museum and Hall of Fame on Spring Street. Displays include paintings of famous trains that once passed through, such as the Orange Blossom Special, and an authentic depiction of an early telegraph office. Both children and adults relish the model train display that depicts the famous locomotives and railyards north of town that once spanned a total of 113 tracks.

There is plenty to see and do outdoors as well. Anglers can send fishing lines into Hinson Lake (Hamlet) and Blewett Falls Lake (west of Ellerbe). Next month, turkey hunters will head for the area's animal-rich public and private game lands. There's also DeWitt's Outdoor Sports, a popular attraction in Ellerbe known for its unique one-mile-long sporting clay shooting course. In Rockingham, golfers can tee off at Richmond Pines Country Club (designed by Donald Ross) or Loch Haven Golf Course.

—Karen Olson House

Three top spots:

Sandhills Game Land: With more than 60,000 acres, it offers bountiful opportunities for hiking, camping, boating, birding, biking and hunting (in season). One section is roughly 15 minutes east of Rockingham. An especially diverse area for plants and wildlife, it is home to abundant deer, turkey, quail, rabbit and fox squirrel populations and also has an excellent road system. Those seeking peace, quiet and solitude can visit on non-hunting days. (919) 707-0010 or www.ncwildlife.com.



Jimmy McDonald Photography

Nostalgic railroad treasures, beautiful game lands and an exciting dragway (above) await visitors to this getaway.

Rankin Museum of American Heritage: The facility in Ellerbe offers displays depicting early settler life. Visitors find that it began with Native Americans along the Pee Dee River through early American life, Natural History and Native American exhibits. Displays about the Civil War highlight crafts and implementations that drove progress. (910) 652-6378 or www.rankinmuseum.org.

Racing speedway and dragway: Hosting several high-octane, big-money events each year, both Rockingham Speedway and Rockingham Dragway are conveniently located across from each other on Highway 1, roughly five minutes from downtown Rockingham. Locals call both places "The Rock." And if you're not content to watch, some programs allow racing fans to get behind the wheel. (910) 205-8800 or www.rockinghamracewaypark.com and (910) 582-3400 or www.rockinghamdragway.com.

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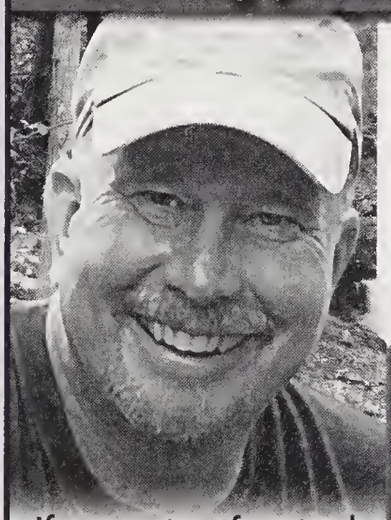
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By Arnie Katz

In the long run, efficient kitchen appliances serve you well

Q We're planning to re-do our kitchen and started looking at new appliances. When we asked the salesperson about Energy Star and energy efficiency in general, he basically said it's all a bunch of hype and we should get appliances with the features we want. My husband said he saw something on the news that the whole Energy Star program was bogus. Is this stuff worth paying attention to?

A There are three issues here, so let's talk about them one at a time. There were reports last year by the Government Accounting Office that the Energy Star program is vulnerable to fraud and abuse. Some bogus products were certified, and some serious weaknesses in the process for certifying products were identified. To throw out the whole program, however, is like saying we should abolish the U.S. Department of Defense because they were paying $600 for a hammer a few years ago. The same report indicated that 98 percent of the Energy Star products met or exceeded the standards. The U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency, who jointly manage the Energy Star program, acknowledged the problems and have put processes in place to improve the program.

The bottom line: the Energy Star label is a reliable indicator of whether a product will save energy when compared with other similar products. Whether it will save you money depends on how much extra it costs (if any), how much you pay for energy, what will happen to energy prices in the future, how much you use the product, how long it lasts, and how much it will cost to maintain it. The Energy Star label should never be the only thing you look for, but in most cases it's a valuable feature. Generally, it tells you that this particular model is in the top 25 percent of similar products in terms of energy efficiency.

In addition, you should always look at the yellow energy label on the appliance. This is also a good indicator of how much it will cost you to operate. Saving a couple of hundred dollars on the dishwasher, for instance, may be a false economy if it uses much more hot water than an efficient model. Over time, the more efficient model will usually save you money.

Finally, consider the features you really need and want. Appliances nowadays come covered with gizmos that add cost and sometimes add to the energy use. A great example is the through-the-door ice and chilled water dispenser on a refrigerator. While some people really use this feature, many folks I've talked with quit using it after a few months. It's not that there's anything wrong with it, except that it does cause the refrigerator to use more energy and cost you more each month, and is one more thing that will eventually break and need to be fixed.

A friend of mine who's in the floor finishing business loves refrigerators with automatic ice makers. He once told me a large portion of his business was re-finishing floors ruined by leaking water lines from refrigerators. The point is simply to think about how much you really need or want or will use a particular feature, and then decide whether the extra costs—both at purchase and for energy—are actually worth it to you.

Finally, do your homework. There's no reason to expect an appliance salesperson to know much about the energy efficiency of the products. Some of them are very informed, but since most people still don't ask about it, energy efficiency is usually way down the list of features they learn about. The best source of information is the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. It regularly publishes test results on a variety of appliances, giving make and model, and has excellent independent consumer information on its website: www.aceee.org/consumerguide/mostenef.htm.



Energy costs to run a new appliance will probably be more than what you pay to buy it. It just makes sense to consider how much your energy costs might be.

Most of us are spending hundreds of dollars a year to run our appliances. The refrigerator or dishwasher you buy today will—you hope—last for at least 10–15 years or more. The energy costs to run it will probably be a lot more than what you pay to buy it in the first place. It just makes sense to consider how much that might be.

Arnie Katz is director of training and senior building science consultant at Advanced Energy in Raleigh (www.advancedenergy.org). Send your home energy questions to editor@carolinacountry.com

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Lemonade Meringue Pie

- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 package (4.6 ounces) cook-and-serve vanilla pudding mix
- 1¼ cups 2% milk
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- ⅓ cup thawed lemonade concentrate
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 1 pastry shell (9 inches), baked

Place egg whites in a small bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, combine the pudding mix, milk and sour cream until smooth.

Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat; cook and stir 2 minutes longer.

Remove from the heat. Gradually whisk 1 cup hot filling into egg yolks; return all to the pan. Bring to a gentle boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat. Gently stir in lemonade concentrate; keep warm.

Add lemon juice and cream of tartar to egg white; beat on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved.

Pour warm filling into pastry shell. Spread meringue over filling, sealing edges to pastry.

Bake at 350 degrees for 15–20 minutes or until meringue is golden brown. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours before serving.



Slow-Cooked Pork Barbecue

- 1 boneless pork loin roast (3 to 4 pounds), cut in half
- 1½ teaspoons seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 cup barbecue sauce
- 1 cup cola
- 8 to 10 sandwich rolls, split

Place roast in a 5-quart slow cooker. Sprinkle with seasoned salt and garlic powder. Cover and cook on low for 4 hours or until meat is tender.

Remove meat; skim fat from cooking juices. Shred meat with a fork and return to the slow cooker. Combine barbecue sauce and cola; pour over meat. Cover and cook on high for 1–2 hours or until sauce is thickened. Serve on rolls.

Yield: 8–10 servings.

Broccoli Cauliflower Salad

- 1 medium head cauliflower, broken into florets (about 7 ½ cups)
- 1 medium bunch broccoli, cut into florets (about 4 cups)
- 2 cups seedless red grapes
- 6 green onions with tops, sliced
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- ½ to 1 pound sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled
- Leaf lettuce
- Additional red grapes, optional

In a large bowl, combine the cauliflower, broccoli, grapes, onions and mozzarella cheese. Combine the mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese, sugar and vinegar; pour over vegetable mixture and toss to coat.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Just before serving, stir in bacon. Transfer to a lettuce-lined bowl. Garnish with grapes if desired.

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Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale, WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web site at www.tasteofhome.com.



Cinnamon Sticky Buns

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup corn syrup
- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 2 tubes (17.3 ounces each) large refrigerated biscuits

In a saucepan, combine the brown sugar, corn syrup and butter; cook and stir until sugar is dissolved. Add the pecans. Spoon into a greased 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking pan. In a shallow bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon. Cut each biscuit in half; dip in cinnamon-sugar mixture. Place, cut side down, over brown sugar mixture. Bake at 375 degrees for 25–30 minutes or until golden brown. Invert onto a serving plate; serve warm.

Yield: 12–16 servings.

From Your Kitchen

Cracked Candy

- 1 package (12 ounce) white chocolate morsels
- 2 cups Planters cocktail peanuts
- 2 cups Golden Grahams cereal

Melt white chocolate morsels in a 9-by-11-inch pan. Add peanuts and cereal and mix well. Cover cookie sheet with waxed paper and pour mixture onto this. Freeze 30 minutes. Break into small pieces. Yummie!

Sue Pittman of Youngsville and ElecTel Cooperative Credit Union will receive $25 for submitting this recipe.

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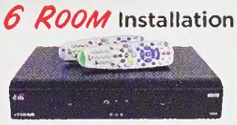
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* Does not include $36 policy fee, minimums may apply

Sample Monthly Rates per 1,000*

Issue Age	Male (tobacco)	Female (tobacco)
5	N/A	N/A
15	N/A	N/A
35	$ 1.79	$ 1.49
55	$ 4.30	$ 3.55
65	$ 7.18	$ 5.41
75	$13.24	$ 8.85
85	$26.26	$17.67

* Does not include $36 policy fee, minimums may apply

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ACT NOW!

Peace of Mind
3700 Forest Drive Suite 205
Columbia, SC 29204

Yes, I would like to know more about peace of mind!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of Birth _____ Telephone _____

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY TO RECEIVE FULL DETAILS WITHOUT OBLIGATION

CC 03/11